

# The Visegrád Countries *and* Brazil

*Edited by*  
Sándor Gyula Nagy



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The Visegrád Countries and Brazil



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Sándor Gyula Nagy



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The Authors:

Maurício da Costa Carvalho Bernardes, Zoltán Dubéczi, Martin Hrabálek, Barbora Janubová,  
Sándor Gyula Nagy, Jan Němec, Judit Riecz, Barnabás Szabó, Bartłomiej Znojek

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The Visegrád Citadel and a detail of the statue of Cristo Redentor in Rio de Janeiro is shown on the cover. (MTI Photo – Balázs Mohai; pixabay – Momentmal)

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# Authors

Martin HRABÁLEK is Assistant Professor at the Department of Territorial Studies, Faculty of Regional Development and International Studies, Mendel University, Brno.

Jan NĚMEC is Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, Faculty of International Relations of the University of Economics, Prague.

Sándor Gyula NAGY is Associate Professor at the Corvinus University of Budapest and a former Deputy Director of Academic Affairs of the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary, where he was a Senior Research Fellow specialised for Latin American affairs.

Judit RICZ is Research Fellow at the Institute of World Economics, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies, where she is responsible for the Latin American region. She is also teaching at the Corvinus University of Budapest, as Assistant Professor, and is mainly involved in courses related to development economics and Latin America.

Zoltán DUBÉCZI is Chief Advisor of the Hungarian Central Bank responsible for educational affairs and the Secretary General of the Hungarian Rectors' Conference; he was the main organiser of the Hungarian execution of the Ciência sem Fronteiras program.

Barnabás SZABÓ is Junior Research Fellow at the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary. He is also a PhD candidate at the Central European University, Budapest.

Bartłomiej ZNOJEK is Latin America analyst at the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM).

Barbora JANUBOVÁ is Assistant Professor at the University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

Maurício DA COSTA CARVALHO BERNARDES, Brazilian Diplomat, Counsellor for Trade and Investments, Embassy of Brazil to Buenos Aires, former Head of the Central and Eastern European Division (2013–2017), Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



# Hungarian Diplomatic Academy

The Hungarian Diplomatic Academy is an educational institution operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. This is the first diplomatic training institution in Hungary providing continuous, high-level theoretical and practical training for current members of the Hungarian Foreign Service, as well as for aspiring diplomats of the next generations. The Academy was established on 1 January 2020 and its three core programs are currently in progress.

The Academy is concerned with national, regional and international issues. Completing our training programs, Hungarian diplomats and foreign trade professionals can acquire new skills, get current information and gain useful experience to successfully represent Hungary's national interests all around the world.

The *Diplomat Training Program* is dedicated to recruit and train young diplomats. The one-year long course offers an opportunity at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade through a two-semester training and internship grant program. Successful graduates of the program will receive a full-time position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It was first launched in September 2020 with 26 students; the second program begins in the Fall of 2021. In the first semester, the training includes theoretical and practical courses. In the second semester, students complete an internship program at the ministry and at a Hungarian mission abroad.

The *Diplomatic Leadership Program* started in 2020, offers mid-career public administration professionals and managers a development opportunity with international outlook which is unique both in Hungary and the region. During this 10-months program, the training combines a professional diplomatic course and a skill-oriented, business-focused higher education program.

The *Corporate Diplomacy Program* will first take place in 2021. The Program offers a unique opportunity for companies to engage their employees in a complex training that combines foreign trade and foreign policy issues. In addition, it provides mutual networking opportunities for the participants with those of the Diplomatic Leadership Program.



# Foreword

It is my pleasure to recommend this book for every student, researcher and diplomat interested in the Brazilian – Central European relations. My congratulations to all the authors for their contributions, and especially to editor Sándor Gyula Nagy, a well-known Latin America expert in Hungary. He is a Professor at the Corvinus University of Budapest and Chief Advisor of the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy, whose dedication and services for improving the Brazilian–Hungarian bilateral relations was recently acknowledged by the Federative Republic of Brazil with the Official Grade of the Rio Branco Order.

Brazil is a distant country, perhaps even a little exotic for most Central Europeans, but we are linked together through historical ties. Maria Leopoldina, daughter of Emperor Francis of Austria, who was also King of Hungary, oversaw the birth of an independent Brazil in 1822 as Princess Regent, and later as Empress of Brazil. His son, Pedro II visited the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy as Emperor of Brazil in 1871. By that time, many Central Europeans, including Hungarians, had found their new home in Brazil as a consequence of revolutions and other political upheavals, or due to mere economic necessity. The turbulent 20<sup>th</sup> century also contributed to the growth of the Central European diaspora in Brazil. Likewise, Brazilians are also present in the Visegrád countries: since 2010, more than two thousand students have arrived to study in Central European, mostly Hungarian universities. After decades marked by political and economic transition, as well as the global economic crisis of the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the recent pandemic, these communities have been vital to help us strengthen existing connections and build new ones.

The objective of strengthening relations between Brazil and the Visegrád Four is in part determined by economic motives as they represent uncharted territory to one another in terms of trade and investment opportunities. However, these cannot be fulfilled without prosperous cultural, scientific and human connections. I hope this book will contribute to a better understanding and building new ties between us.

Orsolya Pacsay-Tomassich, PhD

State Secretary for the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy and the Stipendium Hungaricum  
Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade



# Foreword

We warmly welcome the launch of “The Visegrád Countries and Brazil”, organised by Sándor Gyula Nagy and published by the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy. We are confident that this book will play a very significant role in the research and analysis of the increasingly important relations between Brazil and the four members of the Visegrád Group – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

The high quality of the book clearly reflects the widely acclaimed academic skills and specific knowledge of Latin America by Sándor Gyula Nagy. In recognition to his contribution to the strengthening of academic relations between Brazil and Hungary, my government has decided to bestow on professor Nagy the Order of Rio Branco, one of the most prestigious Brazilian decorations.

The book itself bears witness to the dynamic cooperation in place among the Visegrád countries, as it results from the collaboration between the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy, the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary (IFAT), the Institute for International Relations of the Czech Republic (IIR), the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) and the Faculty of International Relations of the University of Economics in Bratislava (UEB).

“The Visegrád Countries and Brazil” is a very comprehensive work, covering every important aspect of the current dialogue and cooperation between my country and the V4 members, from political relations to cultural and sports corporation. It clearly shows that our present relations have a rich history, involving not only fruitful contacts between our governments but also between our peoples.

In the case of Hungary, where I have the honour to serve since January 2020 as ambassador, our bilateral relationship greatly benefited from the significant presence of Hungarian immigrants to Brazil. We are happy to note that their contribution to Brazilian society in different areas is duly acknowledged in this book. I wish also to highlight the presence of a relatively small but very active and hard-working Brazilian community currently living in Hungary, not to mention the many students that come every year to this country in the scope of the Stipendium Hungaricum programme.

“The Visegrád Countries and Brazil” not only provides a rich and insightful perspective about the present cooperation between my country and the V4 members, but also makes a compelling case about the need to keep investing in

its future. In this connection, the Brazilian Government is deeply engaged in promoting increasingly closer ties in different fields with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. We are firmly convinced that our common cooperation initiatives will bring clear benefits to our peoples.

We commend the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary and the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy for this brilliant initiative, which will certainly receive widespread recognition in Brazil. We hope that “The Visegrád Countries and Brazil” will encourage new research works that can contribute to further strengthen the relations between Brazil and the V4 member countries.

José Luiz Machado e Costa  
Ambassador of Brazil to Hungary

# Introduction

Dear Reader!

You hold a book in your hand, which is very close to my heart. The idea to prepare some kind of publication about the Visegrád Group (V4) and Brazil first arose during my visit at *Fundaão Alexandre de Gusmão* (FUNAG in 2017). The then President of FUNAG, Ambassador *Sérgio Eduardo Moreira Lima* and the Ambassador of Hungary in Brasilia (2014–2018), *Norbert Konkoly* supported the idea and asked me to organise the authors and edit the book. As senior research fellow of the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, I turned first to our V4 partners (in Czechia, Poland and Slovakia) and to the Itamaraty to find the best experts for the job. Finally, after a period of research, we managed to collect a very enthusiastic and dedicated collective of authors from all these countries. Let me thank *them* first of all for writing their chapters and contributing to the book with data, ideas and contact.

Furthermore, I have to thank the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the help provided in publishing a book in this unique and less known topic outside of the European Union. Last but not least I have to thank wholeheartedly Ambassador Lima and Ambassador Konkoly for the starting idea and the support they showed during our work.

I hope You will enjoy the book and learn a lot from it, as much as I did while writing and editing it.

Sándor Gyula Nagy  
Editor of the book



## Chapter 1

### The Czech Republic and Brazil

#### 1.1 Political and diplomatic cooperation

Brazil was the first Latin American country to officially recognise the newly established independent state of Czechoslovakia in 1918. Mutual diplomatic representations were established in 1920 (Czechoslovakia in Rio de Janeiro, at that time the capital of Brazil) and 1921 (Brazil in Prague). However, bilateral relations were minimal, therefore, soon after the opening of the Czechoslovak legation in Rio de Janeiro, the Czechoslovak diplomatic service intended to lower it to the level of a Consulate General. Thanks to the slowly increasing commercial exchange between the two countries, this never happened.<sup>1</sup>

Despite its short duration, the period between wars was fundamental for the shaping of mutual relations and cooperation in further decades. Not surprisingly, the trade and economic co-operation were the principal concern of the Brazil–Czechoslovak ties. Several Czechoslovak companies, mostly from the machinery industry, were successful in the Brazilian market of that time.

The diplomatic relations were interrupted in 1939 in consequence of the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Nazi Germany in March 1939 and the following creation of the so-called Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. However, Brazil never officially recognised neither the “Protectorate” nor the self-declared independent Slovak State, that is, the destruction of Czechoslovakia. It was in 1942, still during World War II, when diplomatic relations were renewed between the Brazilian Government and the Czechoslovak Government exiled in London. Thus, Brazil and Czechoslovakia became war allies and the founding members of the UN in 1945.

<sup>1</sup> Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Příručka o navázání diplomatických styků a diplomatické zastoupení Československa v cizině a cizích zemích v Československu 1918–1985* (Praha: Federální ministerstvo zahraničních věcí, 1987).

The relations during the post-war period were affected by the fact that the two countries appeared on the opposing sides of the Cold War division: Brazil aligned with the USA and Czechoslovakia with the Soviet Union, especially after the Communist takeover of power in 1948. However, even though Brazil declared the local Communist Party illegal in 1947 and soon after severed its diplomatic relations with the USSR, its diplomatic relations with Czechoslovakia were never interrupted.<sup>2</sup> Mutual ties intensified at the beginning of the 1960s, also in consequence of the so-called “New Foreign Policy of Brazil”, through which the Brazilian Government tried to diversify international contacts with strong economic and developmental motivation. In 1960 the diplomatic representations of both Brazil and Czechoslovakia were raised from legations to the level of embassies, and the same year the Brazilian Vice President João Goulart visited Prague.

Due to the Czechoslovak state monopoly on foreign trade until 1989, the desired economic cooperation was significantly linked to the quality of political relations. Thus, despite the occurrence of several diplomatic incidents caused by activities of Czechoslovak foreign intelligence on Brazilian territory, there was mutual interest in the continuations of economic relations.<sup>3</sup> Brazil was a valuable source of iron ore and coffee, and Czechoslovakia was a demanded supplier of industrial facilities (like power plants, for instance). It was mainly after 1974, with the new foreign policy doctrine of “ecumenical and responsible pragmatism” of President Geisel’s administration that the political relations were subordinated to the strengthening of economic ties. It 1984, still during the military rule in Brazil, the Czechoslovak minister of foreign affairs visited Brazil for the first time.

With the civilian government coming to power in Brazil in 1985 and the process of re-democratisation, the mutual relations got new incentives. Between 1985 and 1986, four Czechoslovak ministers visited Brazil, all of them responsible for economy-related areas (foreign trade, energy, industry and finance); in 1988, the

<sup>2</sup> For more on the Cold War period relations, we recommend a very nice chapter written by M Pelant, ‘Československo a Brazílie během studené války’, in *Brazílie v souvislostech*, ed. by Š Grausová, A Rudolfová and M Tichý (Praha: Pavel Mervart, 2019) or J Opatrný, M Zourek, L Majlátová and M Pelant, *Las relaciones entre Checoslovaquia y América Latina 1945–1989. En los archivos de la República Checa* (Praha: Carolinum, 2015). None of them is unfortunately available in English.

<sup>3</sup> M Pelant, ‘Czechoslovakia and Brazil 1945–1989. Diplomats Businessmen, Spies and Guerrilheiros’. *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* 7, no 3 (2013), 116–136.

Czechoslovak Prime Minister visited Brazil, and in 1989, the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Prague. Several bilateral agreements were signed before the fall of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia in 1989 (on economic, scientific and technological cooperation in 1985; on avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes and income in 1986; and on cultural cooperation in 1989).

The political change in Czechoslovakia after 1989 was accompanied by its opening to multilateral cooperation, on the one hand, and by the strive for its new anchoring in the West European political structures (like the European Communities and the NATO), on the other hand. Lots of effort was put into the transformation from the centrally-planned economy to the free market one, and in consequence of the end of state monopoly in the foreign trade, many formerly promising markets were left behind. In political and economic terms, this period was also turbulent in Brazil. Nevertheless, the first official visit of the Brazilian head of state in Czechoslovakia occurred in 1990 when President Fernando Collor de Mello visited Prague.

In 1992, the Czechoslovak Federation was coming to its end with 1 January 1993 as a starting point of the existence of two new independent states – the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Again, Brazil immediately recognised the new-born Czech Republic. In 1994, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the President-elect, visited Prague, and in 1996 Václav Havel, the President of the Czech Republic, officially visited Brazil. The tradition of mutual visits of the heads of state was later maintained. In 2008, it was the turn of President Lula da Silva to visit the Czech Republic; the following year, the Czech President Václav Klaus visited Brazil. In 2016, President Miloš Zeman headed the official Czech delegation to the opening ceremony of the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games. Zeman, who is a vocal supporter of the economic diplomacy, planned an official visit to several Latin American countries – namely Brazil, Colombia and Mexico – during his first presidential term in the years 2013–2018.<sup>4</sup> However, due to several factors adverse to the organisation of the trip (including the worsening health condition of the Czech President), it has not happened.

Notwithstanding, the symbolic importance of the highest level of mutual state visits, the centerpiece of bilateral cooperation is the sectorial cooperation with a strong emphasis on commerce, tourism and defence. Ministerial visits

<sup>4</sup> Lidovky.cz, ‘Zeman cestovatel. Vydá se do Jižní Ameriky či Makedonie. A přivítá návštěvu z Číny’, November 5, 2015.

are quite frequent, mostly as a part of the Czech economic diplomacy. Two inter-governmental agreements were signed in the last ten years: the Agreement between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Economic and Industrial Cooperation (2008) and the Agreement between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Cooperation in Defence Related Matters (2010). Moreover, in 2012, the Czech Ministry for Regional Development and the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of tourism.

Despite the lower intensity of mutual relations compared to other directions of both the Brazilian and the Czech foreign policy, the Czech diplomacy sees Brazil as a leading power of Latin America; this status is underlined also in the most recent “Concept of the Czech Foreign Policy” (adopted in July 2015). This strategic document mentions Brazil four times in the section dedicated to Latin America and the Caribbean, always with a note of its increasing global importance – as a member of the G20, BRICS, and due to its status of a strategic partner of the European Union.<sup>5</sup> The foreign policy concept of the previous right-leaning government from 2011 highlighted the potential of security and military cooperation.<sup>6</sup> The importance given to the collaboration in defence was confirmed in 2015 when the Czech Republic established an office of Military Attaché to its embassy in Brazil. It is the first and only Czech military attaché in the South American region.

Today, the Czech Republic is represented by its Embassy in the capital Brasília, by the Consulate General in São Paulo, and by ten Honorary Consulates with consular jurisdiction in 11 states of the Brazilian Federation. The number of honorary consulates in Brazil has increased significantly during the last years; however, in 2019, three of them were temporarily closed – Honorary Consulates in Vitória, Curitiba and Blumenau (Consulado Geral da República Tcheca em São Paulo). Brazil is the only Latin American country where the Czech Republic has a Consulate General; also, the number of honorary consulates in Brazil is the highest in the region. São Paulo is also one of seven Latin American cities with an office of the Czech Trade Agency (together with Bogotá, Buenos Aires,

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, *Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy*, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, *Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy*, 2011.

Mexico City and Santiago de Chile). Since 2005, visa requirements have been abolished for nationals of both states during their tourist stay up to 90 days.<sup>7</sup>

Table 1: List of missions of the Czech Republic in Brazil in 2019

Embassy	Brasília	Federal District
Consulate General	São Paulo	São Paulo
Honorary Consulate	Salvador	Bahia
Honorary Consulate	Rio de Janeiro	Rio de Janeiro
Honorary Consulate	Recife	Pernambuco (+ Alagoas, Paraíba)
Honorary Consulate	Porto Alegre	Rio Grande do Sul
Honorary Consulate	Belo Horizonte	Minas Gerais
Honorary Consulate	Vitória	Espírito Santo
Honorary Consulate	Curitiba	Paraná
Honorary Consulate	Blumenau	Santa Catarina
Honorary Consulate	Batayporã	Mato Grosso do Sul
Honorary Consulate	Fortaleza	Ceará

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, *Czech Missions Abroad*, 2019

To sum up, the profile of Brazil in the Czech foreign policy is increasing, especially since 2010. The country is explicitly mentioned in two strategic foreign policy documents adopted by two different governments of the Czech Republic after 2011. The position of Brazil in the Czech foreign policy is determined by the domination of economic interests in mutual relations on both sides. The representatives of the two countries meet in only a few international organisations of a global character. The Czech Republic anchors its foreign policy to the European Union and trans-Atlantic structures, and Brazil has its conception of actuation on the international arena, starting from the regional integration of South/Latin America (like Mercosur, CELAC, or UNASUR) to global ambitions (UN and G20, among others). The common ground for both countries is the effort to diversify its international economic linkages to decrease

<sup>7</sup> Sbírka mezinárodních smluv, *Dohoda mezi vládou České republiky a vládou Brazilské federativní republiky o částečném zrušení vizové povinnosti* [Agreement between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on Partial Abolition of Visa Requirements], 2005.

the risk of dependence on just a few destinations for their exports (the EU for the Czech Republic; the USA and the EU for Brazil).

## 1.2 Economic relations

### 1.2.1 Trade

The importance of trade and overall economic ties in mutual relations was already mentioned in part above, as were the economic relations in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this part, we will focus mostly on current economic issues, covering both trade and investments.

Given its size and population, Brazil has always been an essential partner of the Czech Republic (and former Czechoslovakia) in Latin America. Until 2011, Brazil was the number one trade partner in the region, and even though it was surpassed by Mexico since, it remains by far the second-largest trade partner of Czechia in the Latin American region. Brazil currently is, together with the member states of the Pacific Alliance, identified as a key focus of the Czech economic diplomacy in the Latin American region in the Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy issued in 2015.<sup>8</sup>

Mutual trade reached its peak in 2013. The table below clearly shows the impact of the Brazilian economic crisis on it. Starting in 2014, the turnover of the trade declined and only started to rise again in 2017 when the Brazilian economy recovered from the severe economic problems it had faced. Czech exports to Brazil were especially affected as they fell in 2016 to only 61 per cent of the value of 2013.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, the overall Brazilian imports fell from 239,748 million dollars in 2013 to 137,552 million dollars,<sup>10</sup> which means that the decrease of the Czech exports would copy the proportion of the overall decrease of Brazilian imports. Seemingly, the slow recovery of the Brazilian economy and the continuous economic growth in the Czech Republic enabled further increase in mutual trade, with imports from Brazil overpassing exports from Czechia in 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, *Concept*, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Businessinfo.cz, 'Brazílie: Obchodní a ekonomická spolupráce s ČR', December 15, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> World Bank, *Brazil Trade Summary 2018*.

Table 1: Mutual trade between Czechia and Brazil between 2013–2018 (thousands of USD)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Exports from Czechia	426,677	382,652	266,224	259,927	281,616	343,899
Imports to Czechia	281,435	303,487	271,384	221,404	240,774	369,610
Turnover	708,112	686,139	537,608	481,331	522,391	713,509
Balance	145,242	79,165	-5,160	38,523	40,842	-25,711

Source: Czech Statistical Bureau, *Data – Počet cizinců*, s. a.

In the table above, one may see that the imports from Brazil to Czechia were more stable than vice versa. That led to a situation of the negative balance of the Czech Republic in 2015, somewhat unusual in mutual trade between the two countries. With the Brazilian economy slowly recovering since 2016, the balance became positive again for Czechia.

As for the trade statistics, it is interesting to compare the data of the Czech Statistical Bureau with the Brazilian counterpart. While the Czech data show 281.6 million USD, the Brazilian ones show 472.1 million of imports of Czech origin, which is 67 per cent more.<sup>11</sup> The reason for this difference is the fact that many Czech companies are unable to reach the Brazilian market on their own and often use re-exports through various European countries. For the Czech companies, this situation is also typical in some other Latin American countries, most notably Mexico<sup>12</sup> and is often perceived as negative, as many Czech companies are not able to reach the foreign markets on their own and trade with Latin America through countries like Germany or the Netherlands.

Czech economic interests in Brazil are promoted by the Czech Embassy in Brazil and also by the office of CzechTrade in São Paulo. CzechTrade is the national pro-export agency established to help the Czech companies to open new markets and currently has offices in 40 states around the world.<sup>13</sup> The Brazilian CzechTrade office was opened in 2004 and was the first such an office in Latin America.

As for the structure of trade between Czechia and Brazil, the Czech exports compose mainly of machinery. Automobile parts, electrical parts and pumps

<sup>11</sup> Businessinfo.cz, ‘Brazilie’.

<sup>12</sup> M Hrabálek, ‘Česká republika a Latinská Amerika’, in *Česká zahraniční politika v roce 2016*, ed. by M Kořan (Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 2017).

<sup>13</sup> The web page of CzechTrade can be accessed at [www.czechtrade.cz/](http://www.czechtrade.cz/).

form a large part of mutual trade. Pharmaceuticals are the most important part of the Brazilian exports to Czechia, followed by iron and steel and agricultural products, such as tobacco, coffee, or chicken.<sup>14</sup>

One of the critical issues connected to the mutual trade is also the bi-regional trade liberalisation talks between the organisations in which the Czech Republic and Brazil take part – the European Union and Mercosur. Mutual trade liberalisation talks started already in 1999 when the Czech Republic was not part of the European Union. By the time the Czech Republic entered the EU, the talks were stopped and restarted only in 2010.

The Czech Republic belongs to a group of states within the EU that supports the creation of the free trade area between the Union and Mercosur countries. This position is also embraced in the Concept of the Czech Republic's Foreign Policy from 2015, where Czechia states it is 'making efforts to move forward negotiations on the FTA'.<sup>15</sup> The deal was made between the European Commission and the Mercosur countries in mid-2019, but its fate remained unclear when this text was being finished. Some of the EU countries – Ireland, Poland, France and Belgium – have sent an open letter to the European Commission quite soon after the announcement of the end of the negotiations, raising concerns against the treaty, mostly on the basis of the vulnerability of agricultural sectors. Some others, such as Austria, criticised the deal later.

Czechia, on the other hand, was a part of a counter-action towards the abovementioned letter. In July 2017 it signed an open letter to the Commission, expressing its support for the deal, together with Germany, Netherlands, Latvia, Sweden, Spain and Portugal.<sup>16</sup> The reason for the governmental support is a strong position of the Czech industry, mostly machinery and automotive. Practically the only criticism of the treaty came from the agricultural circles, where the associations were afraid of the impact of trade liberalisation on the market, mostly in the beef and poultry sector. Brazil was the seventh largest importer of both beef and poultry into the Czech Republic in 2018.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Businessinfo.cz, 'Brazílie'.

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, *Concept*, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Stratfor, 'EU, South America: 7 European Countries Push Brussels to Close Mercosur Trade Deal', June 26, 2019.

<sup>17</sup> B Pánková, 'Zemědělci se bojí levných dovozů z Jižní Ameriky. Ceny na hovězí mají být nižší, na drůbeží žádná', *E15.cz*, December 16, 2019.

### *1.2.2 Foreign direct investments*

As for 2019, the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade has not provided the whole amount of the Czech investments in Brazil. Several Czech companies have invested in the country, however. The most important of these are Linet, producer of hospital beds, mmcíté, producer of street furniture, SEKO Group, producing steam turbines, or laboratory technique producer Tescan Orsay Holding.

For some of the Czech companies, the Brazilian market proved difficult in the past. One example could be the attempt of a Czech company Česká zbrojovka to invest in the country. The company, as the most significant Czech arms producer, wanted to build a rifle processing plant in the Brazilian state of Santa Catarina as reaching the Brazilian market proved difficult due to the high tariffs on products it produced. Nevertheless, after several years, it decided to stop further attempts, due to the administrative barriers and corruption<sup>18</sup> and also because of the low capacity of its Brazilian counterpart, company RT Trading, to lead the cooperation into the successful building of a mutual assembling planet.<sup>19</sup>

So far, the only important Brazilian investment in the Czech Republic is the ownership of Sellier & Bellot, manufacturer of ammunition, by Brazilian ammunition producer Companhia Brasileira de Cartuchos. The Czech company became part of the Brazilian one in 2009.<sup>20</sup>

As for economic cooperation, currently, the most important project is the one between Brazilian aircraft company Embraer and a Czech aircraft company Aero Vodochody. In 2011, they signed a contract on cooperation on KC-390, multi-purpose military transport aircraft of medium size developed mostly by Embraer. Aero mainly supplies rear fuselage sections, crew and parachute doors, emergency doors, hatches and cargo ramps<sup>21</sup> for the plane that flew for the first time in 2015 as a prototype. The aircraft designed to supply armies or humanitarian missions gained civilian airworthiness certificate in October 2018

<sup>18</sup> Author's interview with the representatives of Česká zbrojovka in June 2016.

<sup>19</sup> J Zatloukal, 'Brazílský projekt České zbrojovky padnul, firma odepsala 17 milionů', *Euro.cz*, January 11, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> See more at [www.sellier-bellot.cz/spolecnost/](http://www.sellier-bellot.cz/spolecnost/).

<sup>21</sup> A Vondra and Ch Johnstone, 'Aero lands major contract for Brazilian military plane', *Lidovky.cz*, April 14, 2011.

and will go into serial production in the first half of 2019, with tens of planes already been ordered.<sup>22</sup>

The low presence of Czech investments in the Brazilian market could be, to a certain degree, explained by the results of an inquiry made by Jiří Kašpar (2016). He interviewed the Czech companies that had experience with the Brazilian market, either as investors or traders. Based on their response, the author lists several problems that make the Brazilian market challenging. Firstly, there are problems of political and economic character, linked to the economic protectionism of the Brazilian governments and the lousy shape of the Brazilian economy in the past years. Secondly, the over-bureaucratisation of the Brazilian public service is extremely time-consuming. Thirdly, the surveyed companies mentioned the cultural specifics and the generally lower reliability of Brazilian partners.<sup>23</sup>

The factors mentioned above make the Brazilian market difficult, but several bodies could help Czech companies to overcome them and successfully enter the Brazilian market. Apart from state-led CzechTrade, there is, for example, the Czech–Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, established in 2008. Its main aim is to strengthen economic ties between Czechia and Brazil and gathers several tens of mostly Czech companies.<sup>24</sup>

### **1.3 Cultural, educational and scientific cooperation**

#### *1.3.1 Czech emigration to Brazil and important Brazilians of Czech origin*

Czech compatriots in Brazil form the second-largest Czech compatriotic community in Latin America, just after Argentine. Czech emigration to Brazil started in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when Bohemia was a part of the Austro–Hungarian Empire, but a more significant wave of migrants came only in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1895, the first Czech compatriotic association in Latin America called Slavia was established in São Paulo and is currently the oldest functioning Czech compatriotic association in Latin America. In July

<sup>22</sup> E15.cz, ‘Letoun Embraer KC-390 získal civilní osvědčení, v Aerus se již rozjela sériová výroba’, October 25, 2018.

<sup>23</sup> J Kašpar, *Česko–brazilské obchodní vztahy* (Praha: VŠE, 2016).

<sup>24</sup> More about the Chamber can be found at its webpage [www.czbrcham.cz/kdo-jsme.aspx](http://www.czbrcham.cz/kdo-jsme.aspx).

1915, in cooperation with Slavia, the first printed Czech journal in Latin America called *Slovan* was issued, although it did not last long and probably had only three issues.<sup>25</sup> The history of the Czech emigration since the 19<sup>th</sup> century is nicely covered by the Patriots Museum of Brazilian Emigration, which was established in 2011 in the small village of Náhlov in northern Bohemia by Petr Polakovič.<sup>26</sup>

Czech migration into Brazil then continued under the “first republic” in Czechoslovakia (1918–1938) and, to a certain extent, during World War II, when Nazi Germany occupied Bohemia and Moravia, the territory corresponding to today’s Czech Republic. According to the Brazilian statistics, 4,795 people came to reside in Brazil between 1922–1937.<sup>27</sup>

One of the Czechs that fled to Brazil during World War II was Jan Antonín Baťa, younger brother of a successful entrepreneur Tomáš Baťa, who created a world-wide “shoe empire”. Jan Antonín Baťa escaped from Czechoslovakia in 1939 and reached Brazil through the United States. Inspired by the unprecedented growth and development of his hometown Zlín, soon after his arrival, he started to work on his project to build ten new industrial towns in Brazil. However, this intention showed to be too ambitious, since Baťa was able to develop only four of them – Batatuba, Mariápolis, Batayporã, and Bataguassu.<sup>28</sup> In post-War Czechoslovakia, Baťa was paradoxically sentenced for collaboration with Nazi Germany in 1947. He allegedly commented on this with the following words: ‘In my homeland, I was sentenced to 15 years of forced labor; so I will serve them in Brazil, and I will contribute to its development.’<sup>29</sup> Until his death in 1965, Jan Antonín Baťa lived in Brazil, where he was instrumental to the growth of the local footwear industry.

The most renowned Brazilian of Czech origin by far is President Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira, who ruled the country between 1956–1961 and is renowned for constructing the new Brazilian capital – Brasília. Kubitschek was

<sup>25</sup> B Baďura and M Baďurová, ‘Vystěhovalectví z českých zemí do Brazílie před vznikem ČSR’, *Český lid* 82, no 4 (1995), 323–335.

<sup>26</sup> The webpage of the museum can be accessed at [www.emigrationmuseum.cz/](http://www.emigrationmuseum.cz/).

<sup>27</sup> J Vaculík, *České menšiny v Evropě a ve světě* (Praha: Nakladatelství Libri, 2009), 147.

<sup>28</sup> G Capistrano, *As cidades da Companhia Bata (1918–1940) e de Jan Antonín Bata (1940–1965): Relações entre a experiência internacional e a brasileira* (São Carlos: University of São Carlos, 2012); M Čermáková, *Batayporã – Historie*, 2017.

<sup>29</sup> iDnes.cz, ‘Před 50 lety zemřel Jan Antonín Baťa. V Brazílii vybudoval imperium’, August 23, 2015.

a grand-grandson of Jan Nepomuk Kubíček<sup>30</sup> that came to Brazil from Southern Bohemia in the 1820s of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>31</sup> Kubitschek was born in 1902 in a small city of Diamantina in Minas Gerais, became the Mayor of the city Belo Horizonte and Governor of Minas Gerais state before becoming the President of Brazil in 1956. He would be aware of his Czech heritage and would mention it during several official occasions.<sup>32</sup>

The fact that the Kubíček family came from southern Bohemia was the basis for the establishment of a link between Southern Bohemia and Minas Gerais. In 2013, a partnership was signed between the city of Třeboň that is in the heart of the region from which the Kubíček family came and Diamantina, the native town of Juscelino Kubitschek in Brazil.<sup>33</sup>

The Czech roots of Juscelino Kubitschek are still subject to the interest of the Brazilian side. In 2013 and 2014, three delegations from Brazil, including parliamentarians from Minas Gerais state, came to the Třeboň region from which his grand-grandfather came. In May 2016, the Brazilian research institute Genomac started a project with the Patriots Museum of Brazilian Emigration and embarked genetical research in the Třeboň region.<sup>34</sup>

In 2016, the southwestern Bohemian town of Nepomuk and the Brazilian São João Nepomuceno established a partnership (the Brazilian town is named after John of Nepomuk, a Czech saint who was born in Nepomuk in the 14<sup>th</sup> century). In 2017 and 2018, there was an exchange of delegations composed by representatives of institutions and businesses from the two towns.<sup>35</sup>

Currently, the most important compatriotic group in Brazil is the Czech–Brazilian Cultural Union (União Cultural Tcheco–Brasileira) based in São Paulo. This organisation is a follow-up organisation of Slavia, founded already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and gathers around 100 members, mostly from the older generation.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The surname Kubitschek is a Germanised version of the Czech form Kubíček.

<sup>31</sup> I Brož, *Kubitschek. Drama života a záhadné smrti prezidenta Brazílie českého původu* (Šternberk: RETI, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> iDnes.cz, ‘Prezident Kubitschek postavil Brasílii za tři roky, jeden měsíc a pět dní’, September 9, 2017.

<sup>33</sup> Velvyslanectví České republiky v Brasília, ‘Třeboň a brazilská Diamantina se staly partnerskými městy’, September 9, 2013.

<sup>34</sup> Třeboň City, *Město Třeboň – Ročenka 2016*.

<sup>35</sup> São Paulo Consulate, ‘Tradiční oslavy v São João Nepomuceno’, May 31, 2018.

<sup>36</sup> Vaculík, *České menšiny*, 252.

The Czech Republic is trying to keep a certain level of interest in the Czech compatriotic community in Brazil. In 2011, three members of the Standing Commission on Compatriots Living Abroad of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic – Tomáš Grulich, Jaromír Jermář and Alena Palečková visited several Czech compatriotic communities in Brazil. In one week, the delegation travelled to Nova Petropolis and Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do Sul, and to Nova Andradina and Batayporá in Mato Grosso do Sul.<sup>37</sup>

### *1.3.2 Brazilians in Czechia*

The most visible Brazilian footprint in Czechia was the stay of the communist intellectual Jorge Amado in Czechoslovakia between 1949–1952. Amado came to Czechoslovakia after the Brazilian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro – PCB) was declared illegal in Brazil in 1947. He resided in the chateau Dobříš in central Bohemia, and during his stay, he had the opportunity to get to know the communist regime in practice. Amado covered his experience with Czechoslovak communism in the book *World of Peace*, published in 1951. However, he distanced himself from this text later and banned its republishing.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, the stay in Czechoslovakia had an impact on his later views and perception of communism and on his departure from the orthodox communist ideas he previously supported.<sup>39</sup>

As for 2017, around 800 Brazilians were living in the Czech Republic. Although the number is small overall, there was a fast increase in the last few years. In 2014, there were less than 400 Brazilians in Czechia (Czech Statistical Bureau). The most probable reason for this increase is probably the growth of the Czech economy and the record low unemployment, together with the economic difficulties in Brazil at the same time.

<sup>37</sup> São Paulo Consulate, ‘Návštěva senátorů u krajanských komunit v Brazílii’, November 14, 2011.

<sup>38</sup> M Zourek, ‘Los viajes de los intelectuales latinoamericanos a Europa Oriental 1947–1956: organización, circuitos de contacto y reflexiones’, *Ars & Humanitas* 11, no 2 (2017), 331–347.

<sup>39</sup> This shift is nicely covered in the work of M Zourek, *Československo očima latinskoamerických intelektuálů 1947–1959* (Praha: Runa, 2018).

### *1.3.3 Educational and scientific cooperation*

The educational and scientific cooperation between Brazil and the Czech Republic is still strikingly underdeveloped, given the fact that the economic relations have a relatively long tradition. Within the approximation of both countries since the mid-1980s, the governments signed the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (1985) and the Agreement on Cultural Cooperation (1989); both are still in force and serve as a framework for the cooperation. In 2008, the ministers of education of both countries signed the Arrangement on Cooperation in Higher Education and Science.

Nevertheless, the cooperation between specific institutions is mostly based on bilateral agreements between them. Around half of the 26 public universities in the Czech Republic have a reciprocal agreement with their Brazilian counterparts (mostly in states in the South-East and South of Brazil) on students and academics exchange. Besides, there is a gradually increasing number of Brazilian citizens studying full academic programs at universities in the Czech Republic, half of them as self-funded.

*Table 2: Number of Brazilian Citizens studying at Czech Universities, 2008–2018*

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Self-funded</b>	2	7	6	12	12	10	14	16	17	20	26
<b>Total</b>	6	15	18	27	27	29	36	36	35	43	60

*Source:* Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic

In order to promote the academic exchange, the Institute of Czech–Brazilian Academic Cooperation, a private company, was established in 2015 with the support of the Brazilian Ambassador in Prague and the Czech Minister of Education. In 2016, it launched a program of internships for Brazilian students at Czech universities (UNIGOU). The internships last up to two months, and the students are entirely responsible for covering the costs of their stay.

The popular program “Science without Borders” launched by the Brazilian Government in 2011, opened new opportunities for scientific cooperation. Nevertheless, the Czech Republic officially joined the program quite late – in 2014. The program was effectively stopped in 2015 and formally ended in 2017. Thus, the number of Brazilian scholars receiving a scholarship for their research stay in the Czech Republic was quite low compared to other participating countries.

Table 3: *Science without Borders: Number of scholars received by Czech institutions*

Receiving institution	Doctoral	Post-doctoral	Total
Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic	8	0	8
Charles University in Prague	3	1	4
Institute of Chemical Technology, Prague	3	0	3
University of South Bohemia	2	1	3
Palacky University, Olomouc	2	0	2
Institute of Macromolecular Chemistry	0	1	1
Masaryk University	1	0	1
Moravian Museum	0	1	1
Total	19	4	23

Source: [www.cienciasemfronteiras.gov.br](http://www.cienciasemfronteiras.gov.br)

In 2019, a new project of Czech–Brazilian cooperation in research and technological development, namely in the area of the so-called Industry 4.0, was launched. Joint call for applied research proposals was open with an allocated budget of up to 3 million USD with the planned start of selected projects' funding starting with January 2020. On the Czech side, the joint initiative is administered by the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TACR), the public agency for promotion of applied research and cooperation between industry and academia; on the Brazilian side, the Brazilian Company of Research and Industrial Innovation (EMBRAPII) and the National Service for Industrial Training (SENAI) are part of the initiative.

#### 1.4 Tourism and promotion of cultures

Tourism belongs to those areas of the Czech–Brazilian relations which have a significant potential for further development. Quite surprisingly, the position of tourism in the economies of both countries is alike. According to the World Tourism Organization, the share of receipts from tourism on the total exports of the respective state is below 5 per cent in both cases. Also, the number of arrivals to the country with a purpose other than an activity remunerated from within the country visited was similar (for instance, in 2005, it counted for 6.3 million arrivals in the Czech Republic and 5.3 million in Brazil). However, since 2014 the international tourism measured by arrivals to the Czech Republic has boomed,

reaching 10.1 million in 2017 while the arrivals to Brazil stagnated (6.6 million in 2017). On the other hand, since 2011, Brazil has overcome the Czech Republic in the total number of departures – nationals leaving the country with a purpose other than an activity remunerated from within the country visited.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, despite its small size, the Czech Republic is an internationally attractive tourist destination, and the Brazilian outbound tourism, in general, is growing. The immense diversity of Brazil and its richness in both natural and cultural terms are substantial grounds for its magnetism as a tourist destination. Though, the economic cycle is a decisive factor of tourism dynamics between the two countries. The following table offers data covering the number of visitors in the period of 2012–2017. Notwithstanding the marginal share of visitors from the other state on the total number of international visitors to it (around 1 per cent in case of the Czech Republic and approximately 0.1 per cent in case of Brazil), the most striking feature of the statistics is abrupt ups and downs in the annual change rates. These swings correlate with the economic recession in Brazil in 2015 and 2016 and its unfavourable presentation in the international media (corruption scandals, political instability, economic crisis and increased crime). However, the Brazilian economy slowly recovers, and, at the same time, the Czech economy is experiencing stable growth accompanied by record-low unemployment. Therefore, the effort needs to be put in a bilateral promotion of the countries as a tourist destination.

*Table 4: Tourism between the Czech Republic and Brazil (2012–2018)*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Brazilian visitors to Czechia</b>	59,782	63,916	68,273	63,312	56,485	63,859	57,685
<b>Annual change (%)</b>	–	6.92	6.82	–7.27	–10.78	13.05	–9.67
<b>Share of total incoming tourism (%)</b>	0.78	0.81	0.84	0.73	0.61	0.63	0.54
<b>Czech visitors to Brazil</b>	7,657	8,066	8,529	8,537	8,346	4,742	5,597
<b>Annual change (%)</b>	–	5.34	5.74	0.09	–2.27	–43.18	18.03
<b>Share of total incoming tourism (%)</b>	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.07	0.08

*Source:* Statistics from the Czech Statistical Bureau and the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism

On the Czech side, the governmental agency Czech Tourism is in charge of this task. Although its headquarters for Latin America is in Mexico, it has a Public

<sup>40</sup> World Bank, *6.14 World Development Indicators. Travel and tourism*, 2018.

Relations representative in Brazil (São Paulo). The webpage of the Czech Tourism is also available in the Portuguese language.<sup>41</sup> Together with its counterparts from other Visegrád Group countries, the agency participates in the collective project “Discover Central Europe”, which also targets Latin America. Since the webpage has only a Portuguese version, not a Spanish one,<sup>42</sup> we can assume that increased attention is given to the Brazilian public. The joint project was re-branded in 2015, and it organises a joint roadshow through various Latin American countries, including Brazil. The target audiences are Latin American buyers and local expert media.<sup>43</sup>

Another way how to promote the Czech culture in Brazil is to support compatriotic groups and the Czech language courses. Since 2006, a Czech language teacher has been selected by the Czech Ministry of Education to support the compatriotic groups in Brazil with activities including language education, promotion of the Czech culture, and other supportive activities. In 2017, two teachers were active in five municipalities: São Paulo (São Paulo state), Batayporã and Nova Andradina (Mato Grosso do Sul) and Porto Alegre and Nova Petropolis (Rio Grande do Sul).<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> The webpage of Czech Tourism can be accessed from [www.czechtourism.com](http://www.czechtourism.com).

<sup>42</sup> The webpage can be accessed from [www.discover-ce.eu](http://www.discover-ce.eu).

<sup>43</sup> Czech Tourism, *Czech Tourism 2017 Annual Report*, 64.

<sup>44</sup> Dům zahraniční spolupráce, *Program podpory českého kulturního dědictví v zahraničí* (krajané, lektori), 2017.

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Sándor Gyula Nagy – Judit Ricz –  
Zoltán Dubéczi – Barnabás Szabó

## Chapter 2

### Hungary and Brazil

#### 2.1 Political and diplomatic cooperation

Seen from Hungary, Brazil is a distant country, perhaps even exotic in the mind of most Hungarians, but the two countries have been linked through the bonds of history. Maria Leopoldina, daughter of Emperor Francis of Austria, who was also King of Hungary, oversaw the birth of an independent Brazil in 1822 as Princess Regent, and later as Empress of Brazil. Official Brazilian–Hungarian relations go back to 1871, when Maria Leopoldina’s son, Emperor Pedro II payed a visit to Hungary – part of the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy at the time.<sup>1</sup> The first Brazilian consulate in Budapest opened in 1873. Diplomatic relations between Brazil and an independent Hungary were established in 1927, when Brazil recognised Hungary as a sovereign country, and Hungary opened an official representation in Rio de Janeiro. Brazil followed suit soon, opening its Budapest representation in 1929. In 1942, bilateral relations were interrupted in the course of the Second World War, and were only reopened in 1961. With the mutual opening of embassies in 1974 in Brasília and Budapest, bilateral relations were raised to a higher level. In 1988, Hungary opened its Consulate General in São Paulo.

Hungary’s network of foreign representations and honorary consuls has had its ups and downs during the past few decades; the São Paulo consulate was closed in 2009, as a result of fiscal restrictions. Recently, the Hungarian Government has put an emphasis on promoting economic relations between Hungary and Brazil, and a new dynamism started in the bilateral relations around 2010–2011. The Hungarian Government announced its “Global Opening Policy” in 2011, which contained a one-and-a-half-page analysis outlining policy aims regarding the Latin American region. In 2011, an Office for Foreign Economic

<sup>1</sup> For a chronology of bilateral relations, see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil, *Hungria – Cronologia das relações bilaterais*, 2019.

Relations and Consulate on behalf of the Embassy in Brasília was opened in São Paulo, and in 2015 it (re)gained the status of Consulate General.

Table 1: List of missions of Hungary in Brazil in 2020

Embassy/consulate	Representative office	Ambassador/Consul
The Embassy of Hungary	Brasilia	Zoltán Szentgyörgyi
Consulate General of Hungary	São Paulo	Szilárd Teleki
Honorary Consulate General	Salvador	Géza Ürményi
Honorary Consulate	Fortaleza	Zsófia Erőss-Sales
Honorary Consulate	Porto Alegre	Veronica Ruttkay Pereira
Honorary Consulate	Belo Horizonte	Ágnes Farkasvölgyi
Honorary Consulate	Florianópolis	Christina Vasconcelos Lago
Honorary Consulate	Jaraguá do Sul	Amauri Francisco Steinmacher
Honorary Consulate	Manaus	Antonio Carlos da Silva
Honorary Consulate	Rio de Janeiro	Nelson Wilians Fratoni Rodrigues

Source: Compiled by the authors based on the data of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary.

Exchanges of high-level visits have accompanied the strengthening of the bilateral dialogue since 2011, when László Kövér, Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly visited Brazil along with some other countries in the Latin American region, like Argentina and Uruguay, with the aim of conducting consultations related to economic cooperation. Numerous visits, bilateral ministerial meetings and consultations have taken place ever since. In June 2013, Michel Temer, Vice President of Brazil at the time, visited Hungary and was received (among others) by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. The visit marked the inclusion of Hungary in the Brazilian scientific exchange program, *Ciência sem Fronteiras*. In 2016, Hungarian President János Áder and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán were present, respectively, at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. On 27 November 2017, Brazil and Hungary issued a joint declaration commemorating the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.<sup>2</sup> President Áder met Michel Temer, this time as President of Brazil, in 2018 at the World Water Forum in Brasília. Most recently, Prime Minister Orbán

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil, *Declaração Conjunta por ocasião dos 90 anos do estabelecimento das relações diplomáticas entre Brasil e Hungria*, November 17, 2017.

was present at the inauguration ceremony of President Jair Bolsonaro in January 2019. The visit provided an occasion to invite President Bolsonaro to Hungary, which he accepted.<sup>3</sup> The President's son, Congressman Eduardo Bolsonaro visited Hungary as part of his European tour in his capacity as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of the Brazilian National Congress.<sup>4</sup> The series of high-level meetings continued with the visit of Ernesto Araújo, Brazil's Minister of Foreign Affairs to Budapest in May 2019. Damares Alves, the Brazilian Minister of Women, Family and Human Rights participated at the Budapest Demographic Summit on 4–7 September 2019. As the Chairman of the Brazilian–Hungarian Economic Committee, Mr Péter Szijjártó visited Brasília and São Paulo on 8 October 2019. He had a bilateral meeting with his counterpart, Mr Ernesto Araújo and was received by Jair Bolsonaro, President of Brazil. Recently the two ministers of foreign affairs had also an official meeting in Washington D.C., USA in February 2020.

Another important initiative of the Hungarian Government was to adopt a decree about the reestablishment of the Hungary–Brazil bilateral relation in foreign policy and foreign trade, which contains concrete projects and initiatives from Hungary to Brazil in the fields of scientific cooperation (establishing a post for scientific attaché in São Paulo), higher education (widening the possibilities for the Stipendium Hungaricum program, and creating a Visiting Professor status at the Universidade de São Paulo), water management and systematic improvement of energy grids.<sup>5</sup>

## 2.2 Economic relations

### 2.2.1 Trade

Agreements and institutional arrangements about economic cooperation between Brazil and Hungary have been in place since the treaty on the avoidance of double taxation was concluded in 1986. In São Paulo, the Brazilian–Hungarian

<sup>3</sup> Government of Hungary, *Brazilian President accepted Hungarian Prime Minister's invitation*, January 3, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> IFAT – Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, *The new foreign policy priorities and the regional role of Brazil*, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Government of Hungary, *II/32/2019 (III.18.) Government Decree on the relaunch of Hungarian–Brazilian foreign policy and foreign economic relations*, March 18, 2019.

Chamber of Commerce and Industry was established in 1990, and a similar institution was set up in Rio de Janeiro in 2004. In the same year, a cooperation agreement was signed between the trade promotion agencies of the two countries, ITD Hungary and APEX Brasil. Despite these efforts, Hungarian and Brazilian economic relations have intensified only since 2008, when Brazil acknowledged Hungary as a market economy, and the two countries signed an Economic Cooperation Agreement.<sup>6</sup> This was followed by several meetings of the Joint Economic Committee, with the promotion of trade and investment and the exploration of new areas of cooperation as the main objective.<sup>7</sup> To actively promote economic relations, with a special focus on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), Hungary opened a National Trading House in 2014 in Rio de Janeiro. The posting of economic attachés to the official representations in Brasília and São Paulo served a similar purpose. The system of export promotion based on the trading houses are being reconfigured since 2018, their role being integrated into the Hungarian Export Promotion Agency (HEPA).

Brazil is one of the most important trading partners for Hungary in the Latin American region, placing second after Mexico. As shown in the next graph, trade relations between the two countries started to revitalise after the global economic crisis of 2008–2009. From 2010 to 2013, bilateral trade increased dramatically, especially regarding Hungarian exports to Brazil. Imports from Brazil have grown at a moderate rate with eventual setbacks, growing from 106 million USD in 2009 to 191 million USD in 2017. Exports to Brazil have been increasing at a much higher pace: they have almost quadrupled between 2009 and 2013, reaching a peak of 403 million USD before falling back to 190 million USD in 2016 and regaining their momentum with 245 million USD in 2018. These numbers should be considered in relation to their weight in the total trade of Hungary and Brazil, where rather marginal shares are to be found for both sides. Brazilian exports in the Hungarian total export account for approximately 0.21 per cent, while imports barely reach 0.18 per cent. From the Brazilian point of view, Hungary represents an even smaller share in Brazilian trade, somewhere between 0.1 and 0.2 per cent in the period from 2012 to 2017.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The Agreement was signed in May 2006 but entered into force only in October 2008.

<sup>7</sup> The first meeting of the Joint Economic Committee was held in 2012 in São Paulo (where the second Technical-Scientific Cooperation Agreement was signed), and was followed by a second meeting in Budapest in 2013. The next meeting is scheduled for 2019 in Brasília.

<sup>8</sup> UN Comtrade, s. a.

According to Brazilian Government data, Brazilian exports to Hungary reached a cumulative value of 93 million USD in the first half of 2017, and 65 million USD in the first half of 2018. Hungarian exports to Brazil, according to the same dataset, reached 154 and 192 million USD, for the same periods, respectively. This concurs with the post 2009 trends, inasmuch as Hungary exports more to Brazil than the other way around.<sup>9</sup>

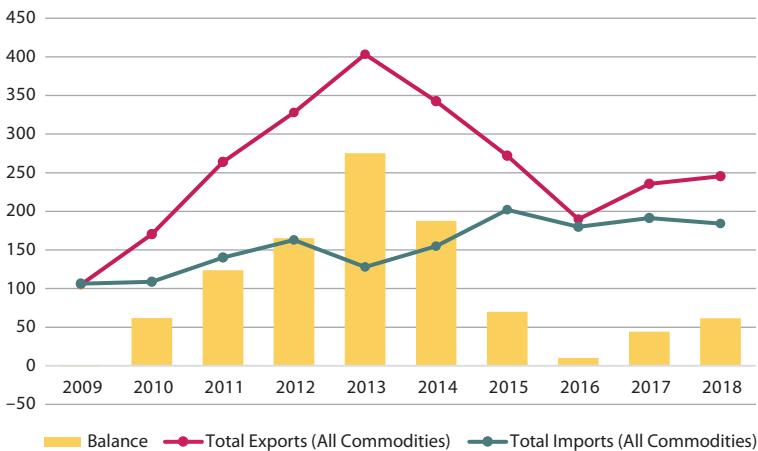


Figure 1: Hungary's trade with Brazil, 2009–2018 (in million USD)

Source: UN Comtrade, s. a.

The trade structure between Hungary and Brazil is traditionally dominated by machinery and transport equipment, but manufactured goods tend to come in second place. Besides these categories, chemicals and related products, and crude material also appear at the top in the Hungarian export to Brazil, while animal fur and leather products feature high on the list of Brazilian exports to Hungary. The most significant import goods besides machinery, transport equipment and manufactured goods are crude material, food, beverages, tobacco and chemicals.

<sup>9</sup> Secretaria de Comércio Exterior (Ministry of Trade of the Federative Republic of Brazil).

### 2.2.2 Foreign direct investments

Bilateral trade is mostly conducted via multinational corporations and their subsidiaries. Hungary actively seeks to strengthen trade activities of SMEs between the two countries, but the specificities of the business environment in Brazil – such as the complicated administrative and taxation processes – impose a certain limitation on the opportunities of Hungarian companies that would want to operate on the Brazilian market. Innovative businesses producing or selling products or services that do not require transportation and long registration processes have the best chance to be successful in Brazil. Some 50 Hungarian-owned companies are estimated to be present on the Brazilian market, but no official statistical data is available in this regard. These companies either opened a subsidiary in Brazil, or they are only present through a representative.<sup>10</sup> The table below contains the names and profiles of Hungarian companies with a subsidiary in Brazil that the authors have been able to identify.

Table 2: List of Hungarian companies with a subsidiary in Brazil

Company	Profile
Köforma Kft. (Bade Ltda) <sup>11</sup>	Construction material, paving blocks and garden pavement
F.Q.L Systems Konzorcium <sup>12</sup>	Construction
Medimpex Kereskedelmi Kft. (Medimpex Brasil Ltda) <sup>13</sup>	Pharmaceutical products and medical tools
Umirs Europe Kft. (Umirs Brasil Ltda) <sup>14</sup>	Professional perimeter protection devices, systems
JobCtrl <sup>15</sup>	Working time optimisation software
Graphisoft (Graphisoft Brasil Ltda) <sup>16</sup>	Building information modelling software
Fox Transfer <sup>17</sup>	Airport transfer services
Richter Gedeon Nyrt (Gedeon Richter do Brasil S.A.) <sup>18</sup>	Medical drugs

<sup>10</sup> Source: Embassy of Hungary in Brasília.

<sup>11</sup> Source: <http://koforma.com.br/sobre/> (accessed 4 June 2019).

<sup>12</sup> Source: [www.fqlsystem.eu/contato/](http://www.fqlsystem.eu/contato/) (accessed 4 June 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Source: [www.medimpex.hu/index.php/en/trade/export](http://www.medimpex.hu/index.php/en/trade/export) (accessed 4 June 2019).

<sup>14</sup> Source: <https://umirs.com.br/> (accessed 4 June 2019).

<sup>15</sup> Source: <https://jobctrl.com/> (accessed 4 June 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Source: [www.graphisoft.com/br/](http://www.graphisoft.com/br/) (accessed 4 June 2019).

<sup>17</sup> Source: <https://foxtransfer.eu/brazil-airport-transfers.es.html> (accessed 4 June 2019).

<sup>18</sup> Source: [www.richter.hu/en-US/richter-group/subsidiaries/Pages/Brasil.aspx](http://www.richter.hu/en-US/richter-group/subsidiaries/Pages/Brasil.aspx) (accessed 4 June 2019).

According to Hungarian diplomatic sources in Brazil,<sup>19</sup> demand for the following products and technologies have the most potential to provide Hungarian businesses with opportunities in Brazil:

- technologies related to sewage and waste management
- drinking water solutions
- renewable energy (wind and solar powered)
- construction technologies, software and special construction material
- public lighting systems
- manufacturing technologies related to machinery and individual production process design
- information technology, production optimising software, smart city solutions
- yield enhancing solutions for the agricultural sector
- security systems, perimeter and object protection, related tools and software
- pharmaceutical ingredients
- health related products and medical tools
- high-tech plastics for the automotive industry, and the production of household machinery and semi-conductors
- paper

According to the same sources, demand for the following products and technologies will grow until the early 2020s:

- technologies related to the mining industry
- infrastructure and tools for the delivery and/or conveyance of electricity, water, gas and sewage
- solutions for the chemical and petrochemical industries
- biofuels and technologies related to their production
- track-based transportation infrastructure, vehicles
- automotive parts
- household machinery

Brazilian businesses are also present in Hungary, either through subsidiaries, or through capital investment in Hungarian companies. The table below shows a list containing the most important of these companies and their field of activity.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Zoltán Szentgyörgyi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary to the Federative Republic of Brazil, April 2019.

Table 3: List of Hungarian companies with significant Brazilian investment and/or income

Company	Profile
ZALAGRÁR Kft.	Agricultural production (cereals, vegetables, oil plants)
SJ-BAU Kft.	Construction of residential and non-residential buildings
KPMG Global Services Hungary Kft.	Accountancy, audit and fiscal consultancy
Karcagi Kerámia Kft.	Technical ceramics production
Go2maps Hungary Kft.	Information services
EUROIL Kft.	Business consultancy
“ELDORÁDÓ” SPORT HOTEL Kft.	Restauration and catering
ecoMIM Kft.	Production of metal processing tools
DAJA-PÉKSÉG Kft.	Bakery products
CARTA Magyarország Kft.	Accountancy, audit and fiscal consultancy
BUD Kft.	Information services

Source: Data provided by the Embassy of Brazil in Budapest, February 2020.

Regarding foreign direct investment (FDI), in general it can be stated that FDI from Latin American countries to the Visegrád countries is mostly characterised by high year-to-year volatility and relatively low volumes, whereas yearly FDI figures are mostly bound to one or two transactions.<sup>20</sup> Concrete data on inward and outward FDI between Hungary and Brazil is often misguiding, and different sources (such as the Hungarian Central Bank, the Hungarian Statistical Office or governmental bodies) speak about different magnitudes of flows. However, the significance of these investment flows in the overall FDI flows is rather marginal, approximately equals of 0.1 per cent of the total volumes.

In contrast to data from the Hungarian Central Bank, the Hungarian Government speaks about more than 400 million USD Brazilian investment coming to Hungary since 2001, and mentions the following companies as taking the lead: Gerdau Hungria (iron industry), Petrobrás Hungary (petrochemicals), Votorantim – VCP Overseas Holding (commodities such as sulphate paper), Aracruz Celulose SA – Aracruz Trading Intl. (commodities such as cellulose), JBS SA – JBS Hungary Holding (beef), Comexport Trading (chemicals and fertilisers), BG Market (dealing with Hungarian wines and Brazilian textile

<sup>20</sup> A Éltető, *Trade and investment relations between Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Budapest: Institute of World Economics Working Paper 206, Centre for Economic and Regional Studies HAS, 2014).

products) and Sabo Ind. e Com. – KACO Hungary (auto parts).<sup>21</sup> In 2008, the Brazilian–Belgian beer company InBev has set up a financial and accounting service centre in Budapest but in 2016 left the Hungarian capital. Stefanini, an IT company, has opened a small subsidiary in Budapest in 2014 (following its Polish investment a few years earlier). The Brazilian Central Bank (BCB) has a dataset of similar magnitude, it documents approximately 428 million USD Brazilian FDI coming to Hungary between 2006 and 2014, with two peaks in 2008 and 2010 (106 and 183 million USD respectively), with all the other years remaining significantly below, mostly around 10 million USD yearly.



Figure 2: FDI coming from Brazil to Hungary (IFDI) and FDI from Hungary to Brazil (OFDI)<sup>22</sup>

Source: Hungarian Central Bank

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, *Kétoldalú gazdasági kapcsolatok*, 2015.

<sup>22</sup> Looking at FDI coming to Hungary from Brazil (IFDI) negative figures can be explained by the definition of FDI data that includes “other capital” referring to intercompany transactions (and for example the loans from the direct investment enterprise to the parent can exceed the loans given by the parent).

The outward FDI (from Hungary to Brazil) has reached relatively higher levels, though also showing strong volatility from year to year, and these ups and downs can mostly be explained by certain transactions of one or two firms. The latest quarterly balances can be seen in the next graph.

Several institutional channels aim to promote investment in both regions. Besides the cooperation agreement of the two countries' investment agencies (HITA<sup>23</sup> and Apex Brazil) also an agreement between the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) and the Hungarian Eximbank aims to help financing projects of the two countries.

From the Brazilian point of view, Brazilian firms are mostly interested in investing in Hungary, as part of their internationalisation strategy, and consider Hungary a gateway (or logistical hub or even service sub-centre) to the Western or Eastern European market. For Hungarian firms, Brazil offers investment opportunities mainly related to infrastructure (logistics, city development, transport, etc.), manufacturing or the petrochemical sector.

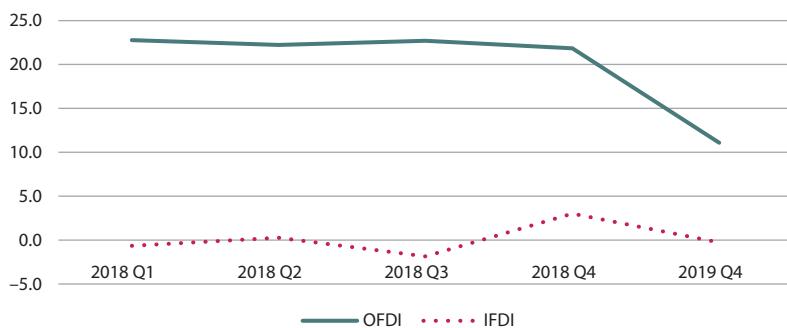


Figure 3: FDI coming from Brazil to Hungary (IFDI) and FDI from Hungary to Brazil (OFDI), quarterly data in million EUR

Source: [www.mnb.hu/letoltes/ifdiorszagesagazatibontaseurhu.xlsx](http://www.mnb.hu/letoltes/ifdiorszagesagazatibontaseurhu.xlsx); [www.mnb.hu/letoltes/ofdiorszagesagazatibontaseurhu.xlsx](http://www.mnb.hu/letoltes/ofdiorszagesagazatibontaseurhu.xlsx) (accessed 10 December 2019).

<sup>23</sup> HITA was split in 2014; its investments' agency is actually called HIPA.

## 2.3 Cultural, educational and scientific cooperation

The Hungarian–Brazilian cultural agreement entered into force in 1996. The Hungarian Government proposed a Cultural Action Plan in 1997, which was eventually not signed due to a mutual lack of finances. Consequently, cultural initiatives between the two countries are organised mostly on the individual or university level. In São Paulo, Curitiba and Porto Alegre Hungarian Cultural Weeks are organised occasionally. In Hungary, initiatives for Brazilian cultural events most often come from the Brazilian Embassy and the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest (ELTE). Following an initiative from the Brazilian Embassy, the Brazilian Scientific Center opened at ELTE in 2016.<sup>24</sup>

The Scientific and Technological Cooperation Agreement between Brazil and Hungary was signed in 1986, and has served as a basis for several bilateral cooperation, mainly related to agricultural issues and water management. A good signal of intensifying cooperation in this area was the organisation of the World Science Forum in 2013 in Rio de Janeiro, hosted by the Brazilian Academy of Sciences in partnership with (among others) the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. For Hungary, scientific and technological cooperation serves as an opportunity to provide technology transfer to Brazilian industry, in areas such as biotechnology, medical equipment and the energy sector.

### 2.3.1 Famous immigrants

Over the centuries, Brazil received many immigrants with ties to Hungary; many of them made an impact on the cultural or scientific life of the country.<sup>25</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, newcomers from the territories of the Kingdom of Hungary tended to be missionaries, mostly from the Jesuit order, like *Ignác Szentmártonyi* (1718–1793). He arrived in Brazil in 1749 as part of a mission dispatched on the orders of King John V of Portugal, exploring the region of the common border of Peru and Bolivia with the current Rondonia and Mato Grosso, as well as the jungles of the Rio Negro. After the dissolution of the Jesuit order

<sup>24</sup> ELTE – Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest, *Megnyílt az ELTE brazil tudományos központja*, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> See Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary – Department for Latin America and the Caribbean, *Hungarians in Latin America*, 2018.

in Portugal in 1758, he was seized in Brazil and transported to a Portuguese prison, where he spent eighteen years before finally returning to the Habsburg Empire. *Dávid Alajos Fáy* (1721–1767), another Jesuit missionary, discovered the region around São Marcos bay, where he encountered several local ethnic groups, and wrote reports on them that, despite his lack of scientific training, became valuable sources on the indigenous population. Much like Szentmártonyi, Fáy was expelled from Brazil and imprisoned in Portugal, where he eventually died. *József Haller* (1725–1777), the abbot of the monastery of Máramaros, also started his missionary career in the New World in Brazil. *József Kayling* (1725–1791) arrived from the Jesuit congregation in Trenčín to Brazil in the 1750s. He joined missionaries who were involved with the tremembé indigenous community. He was given charge of the operation of a sugar mill, but shared the fate of many of his fellow Jesuits and ended up imprisoned in Lisbon. He was only released at the intervention of Empress–Queen Maria Theresa.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century, fleeing revolutions and other political upheavals, or mere economic necessity often brought Hungarians to Brazil. The composer and orchestra conductor *Francisco José Debali o Ferenc József Debály* (1791–1859), known for composing the music of the Uruguayan, and perhaps also the Paraguayan national anthem, emigrated to Brazil with his wife in 1838. *László Magyar* (1818–1864) arrived in Brazil on an Austrian courier ship as a naval cadet in 1843; in 1845, he became a lieutenant of the La Plata State fleet in the war of La Plata and Uruguay. The failed war of independence against the House of Austria in 1849 resulted in a flow of refugees from Hungary; many of them seeking shelter and establishing themselves in Latin America. Count *Samu Wass* (1814–1879) was sent to the American continent by revolutionary leader Lajos Kossuth; he was trying to deliver arms to the revolutionaries of 1848–1849 from Brazil. The jurist and historian *Károly Kornis* (1822–1863) arrived in Brazil in 1849; he opened a photography workshop and became the official photographer of the Audit Office. He also worked as a legal advisor for the Brazilian diplomatic representation after he learned Portuguese. He became friends even with the Emperor Pedro II of Brazil. He was a multifaceted person, fought for the rights of the settlers, imported Hungarian wines and published several studies on issues of law, Latin language and civil marriage. *János Décsy* (exact lifespan unknown), an officer of the Hungarian War of Independence of 1848–1849, arrived in Petropolis, the imperial capital in 1854. Later, he participated at the recruitments in São Paulo, and joined the Brazilian military operations against Paraguay. He became President of the Itajaí colony.

The troubled 20<sup>th</sup> century also contributed to the growth of the Hungarian community in Brazil. The painter *Árpád Szenes* (1897–1985) left Paris for Brazil during the Second World War; he lived there for seven years, painting mainly portraits and book illustrations. His works have travelled all over the world and can now be seen in the Museum of Fine Arts of Hungary, in the city of Pécs, and they have also been exhibited in Brazil and Portugal. Calvinist pastor *Arnold Szelecz* (1900–1972) was appointed as the first pastor of the Hungarians in Brazil; he arrived in São Paulo in 1931. He travelled around Brazil and organised the building of a church in Árpádfalva (located in the state of São Paulo, part of the city of Caiuá). *János Apostol* (1903–1991) was also a pastor of the Reformed Church; he established the Brazilian branch of the Hungarian Reformed Church in São Paulo. In 1932, the Synod of the Reformed Church in Hungary sent him to Brazil for three years. Eventually, he led the reformed community there until his death. The painter and film director *Ákos Hamza* (1903–1993) left Hungary in 1944. He shot films in France and Italy, and from 1953 in Brazil. He settled in São Paulo with his wife. Transylvanian-born painter *Yolanda Mohalyi Lederer* (1906–1978) arrived in São Paulo, where she taught painting. Her first solo exhibition opened in 1945, and in 1958 she won the Leirner Prize. In 1963, at the Seventh International Biennial of São Paulo, she was awarded the prize for best painter. *Pál Rónai* (1907–1992) was a literary historian and translator; he published a book of Brazilian poems that was translated by him. In 1941, he was deported to a forced labour camp, but with the help of his Brazilian friends he managed to escape and emigrated to Brazil. There he started working as a journalist and taught Latin and French. He translated into Portuguese the work of Ferenc Molnár, *The Paul Street Boys*, which is also read in primary schools in Brazil up to this day. *Sándor Lénárd* (1910–1972) was born into a wealthy bourgeois family, spoke 13 languages, and before the Anschluss, he studied medicine in Vienna. With his Italian wife, he emigrated to Brazil where he won a television contest, and with the money earned he built a house in Dona Emma. He practiced medicine at Dona Emma (Santa Catarina State), and in his spare time he translated books from the 20<sup>th</sup> century into Latin, including *Winnie the Pooh*. He was invited to teach in the United States, but after a year he returned to Dona Emma. On one occasion he was mistaken for Doctor Mengele, which almost cost him his life, but in the end managed to clear up the accusations.

Second and third generation Hungarians often become accomplished citizens of Brazil, while also cultivating their Hungarian identity. The parents of *Éva Todor* (1919–2017) escaped to Brazil from the economic crisis after the First

World War. As a child, she studied ballet at the Teatro Grande in Rio de Janeiro. From the age of 17, she got roles in comedies and soap operas. Photographer *Tamás György Farkas* (1924–2011) arrived in Brazil between the two World Wars as a child. At the beginning, he photographed ballet companies and sports events and recorded the daily life of São Paulo and Rio. He recorded the construction and inauguration of Brasília. He was also the producer of 30 documentaries and 8 films. *Tibor Cseh* (1925–2004) emigrated after the Second World War, for political reasons. He arrived in Brazil in 1960 and worked as an engineer for a long time for a U.S. company in Mexico, Argentina and Canada. He taught at and became Vice Chancellor of the Könyves Kálmán Free University of São Paulo. *Marika Gidali* (1937–) moved to Brazil with her parents after the War. Her aunt lived in São Paulo, where she started dancing, and at the age of 16 she was already a dancer in the company of Aurél M. Milloss. In the late 1950s, she founded her own company, she was the choreographer of several television programs and musical films. She played an important role in the creation of modern ballet. In 1971, together with her husband, she founded the famous Staggium Group. She created a foundation to support children and women. Her ballet shows and choreographies are well known and popular throughout Brazil. For her work, she was awarded by UNICEF, as well as by the Brazilian State. *István Jancsó* (1938–2010) left Hungary with his family in 1944. They lived in refugee camps for 4 years. Eventually they arrived to Rio de Janeiro, where they lived in difficult conditions at first. Later he graduated in humanities and began to research and teach in the History Department of the University of São Paulo. Well-known second and third generation immigrants of Hungarian origin today include journalist *Cora Rónai* (1953–), journalist, translator and poet *Nelson Ascher* (1958–), actress *Cássia Kiss* (1958–), paediatrician and translator *Paulo Schiller* (1958–), film director *Sandra Kogut* (1965–), and actress, TV host and model *Adriane Galisteu* (1973–).

### *2.3.2 Hungarian presence in Brazil today*

According to estimates, the Hungarian diaspora living in Brazil approximates 80–100 thousand people. The largest part of the Hungarian diaspora lives in São Paulo and its region, 8–10 per cent lives in Rio de Janeiro and in its surroundings, and only a smaller portion lives in more remote areas. According to our interviews,

the Hungarian diaspora in São Paulo is very active and has played an important role in the recent revitalisation of the bilateral relations.

Many important cultural and educational institutions in Brazil have Hungarian origins, especially in the areas where the Hungarian diaspora is concentrated. In São Paulo, the renowned Saint Emerich School (*Colégio Santo Américo*) was founded in 1951 by the Hungarian monks of the Benedictine Order, living in the Saint Gerald Monastery. The school quickly became popular; the number of enrolled students reached 400 in the mid-1950s. In 1963, the school moved to the Morumbi district of São Paulo, where it is situated today. In 1980, coeducational schooling was introduced, making the school accessible to female students. The Santo Américo further expanded in the 2000s, when elementary and kindergarten education was added to its profile.<sup>26</sup>

The Hungarian Association (*Associação Húngara*) brings a Hungarian dimension to the vibrant cultural life of São Paulo. Its most popular cultural programs are doubtless the dance clubs that cultivate Hungarian folk dance traditions in Brazil, hosted by the Hungarian House.<sup>27</sup> The Association is also involved in the organisation of sports clubs, literary and Bible study circles and the Könyves Kálmán Free University. In the framework of the Free University, roundtables, lectures and discussions are organised, covering a wide array of cultural, scientific, historic and social topics.<sup>28</sup>

### 2.3.3 Brazilian–Hungarian educational relations

Educational relations between Brazil and Hungary strengthened significantly after the Brazilian Government supported the education of 2,200 Brazilian students in Hungary in the Science without Borders scholarship program between 2013 and 2016. Since then, the main catalyst for student mobility from Brazil has been the Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship program; however, academic relations have also been fostered by scientific conferences and professional visits in both countries.

The Science without Borders scholarship program, funded by the Brazilian Government, enabled 100,000 Brazilian students to pursue short-term academic

<sup>26</sup> Colégio Santo Américo, *Nossa história*, s. a.

<sup>27</sup> Associação Húngara, s. a.

<sup>28</sup> Associação Húngara, Universidade Livre Könyves Kálmán, s. a.

programs abroad between 2012 and 2016. Hungary joined the program as the first Central European country offering various undergraduate and graduate courses in the STEM<sup>29</sup> fields, as well as health and creative sciences in fifteen Hungarian universities. Altogether 2,200 Brazilian students arrived in Hungary, which number enabled the country to reach the 11<sup>th</sup> place in the imaginary world ranking of over 40 countries in the program.

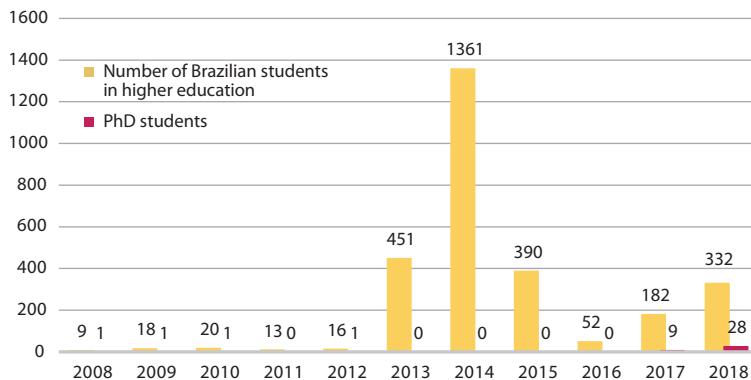


Figure 4: Number of Brazilian students in Hungarian higher education (total and PhD students)  
Source: Data provided by the Embassy of Brazil in Budapest, 2019.

Coordinated by the Hungarian Rectors' Conference (HRC), the program played a prominent role in the internationalisation of Hungarian higher education, as institutions could launch additional courses in English language, further develop their degree programs and curricula, and improve services and infrastructure to become more student-centred, meanwhile the success of the program greatly contributed to the expansion of educational, scientific, cultural and economic relations between Brazil and Hungary.

In 2016, the Hungarian Rectors' Conference launched a student ambassador program to strengthen bonds and improve better understanding between our nations with the power of an alumni network. Based on their academic advancement, social activities and personal relations, ten Brazilian students were

<sup>29</sup> Science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

awarded with the ambassador title to represent different regions and universities of Brazil in Hungary and to promote Hungary and related opportunities in Brazil.

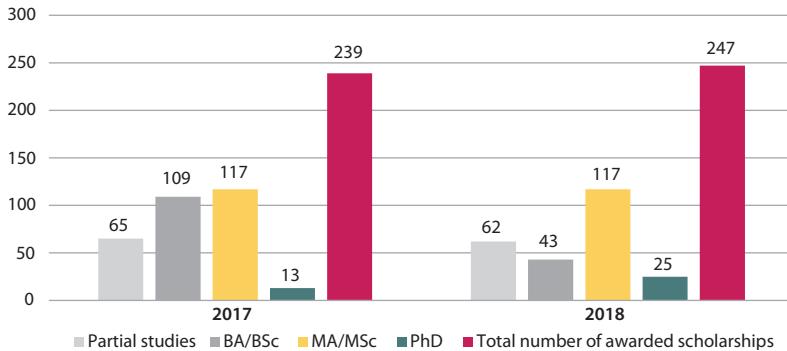


Figure 5: Brazilian students awarded with the *Stipendium Hungaricum* scholarship

Source: Data provided by the Tempus Public Foundation, 2019.

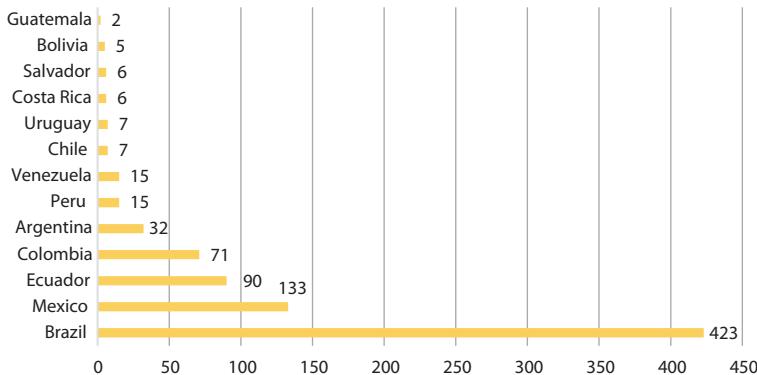


Figure 6: Number of Latin American students in Hungary (2019–2020)

Source: Higher Education Information System – FIR, February 20, 2018.

Since 2013, the main driver of incoming mobility in Hungary is the *Stipendium Hungaricum* scholarship program (SH), founded by the Hungarian Government in the framework of the “Opening to the East/South” policy. According to the

guidelines of the European Union and the European Higher Education Area, the educational objective of the program is to promote the internationalisation of Hungarian higher education, to strengthen the international relations of the Hungarian institutions and to promote competitive Hungarian higher education in the world. The success of the program is demonstrated by the fact that since its launch, there are almost 70 partner countries and over 5,000 scholars involved in the program. In the framework of the program, the Hungarian Government offered 25 scholarships for Brazilian students and researchers in all scientific fields at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level, but due to the popularity of the program the Hungarian Party increased the number of scholarships to 250 from 2016.

In the academic year of 2019–2020, the number of foreign students was 38,422 in Hungary, which gives 15 per cent of the total number of students studying in the Hungarian higher education system. Latin American students make up only a small percentage of incoming students (currently around 800 students); and the biggest group among the Latin American countries represents Brazil with 423 students.

In 2015, a Hungarian language and culture course started at the University of São Paulo, the largest university of Latin America and the most prominent educational and research potential of the region. The course has been realised in the framework of the professional cooperation between the University of Pécs and the University of São Paulo, supported by the Pallas Athené Domus Animae Foundation (PADA) with the contribution of the HRC. The PADA took the responsibility of maintaining the program for at least five years, ensuring the long-term possibility of learning Hungarian for the Hungarian community in São Paulo, for Brazilian students who had studied in Hungary and for those interested in the language and culture of the country. Based on the success of the courses in São Paulo, another two Hungarian courses were launched at the State University of Ceará in Fortaleza, and at the Positivo University in Curitiba.

As Latin America's greatest Hungarian diaspora can be found in São Paulo, an annual conference has been organised since 2015 to process the history of Hungarian immigrants in Brazil and to provide lectures related to Hungarian culture, literature, language, music or economy.

In 2018, new perspectives opened with the establishment of the Society of Hungarian Professors in Brazil. The purpose of the Society is to bring the Brazilian and Hungarian higher education and research closer to the Hungarian diaspora through academic actors from different disciplines.

Since 2012, dozens of Hungarian delegations have visited Brazil to pursue university visits and, bilateral meetings, to participate at student fairs (for example EuroPós, Salão do Estudante) or conferences related to higher education (for example FAUBAI Conference, Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities Conference).

In 2018, at the invitation of the Hungarian Rectors' Conference, the delegation of the Brazilian Association of Rectors of State and Municipal Universities (ABRUEM) visited Hungary with the aim of mapping the academic and research collaboration possibilities between the two nations. Meanwhile, in the framework of the Global Universities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century international higher education conference, organised by the HRC and the Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities (CGBU), over 80 Brazilian rectors arrived in Budapest to develop bilateral cooperation and discuss research collaborations with the Hungarian Government and university representatives.

Apart from the intensive incoming student mobility from Brazil through scholarship programs, there is a great perspective in launching common research projects and publications in the field of robotics, water engineering and smart technologies. Hopefully, the expansion of institutional bilateral relations will also result in the increasing number of Hungarian students choosing Brazil as a study destination.

## **2.4 Tourism and sport**

Concerning tourism, Hungary and Brazil have signed a cooperation agreement in tourism in 1997, and since 2001 a mutual visa waiver agreement has been in force. The number of Brazilians visiting Hungary has increased significantly recently, reaching the threshold of 30,000 visitors on a yearly basis in 2013. We have not found any reliable numbers on flows into the opposite direction; but the magnitude of these outflows remains well below the above-mentioned numbers (in 2012 according to some estimates around 5,400 Hungarian visitors travelled to Brazil).

Sport is an important addition to cultural diplomacy, and there are quite a few ties between Brazil and Hungary in that respect. Eduarda Idalina Amorim, a Blumenau (Santa Catarina) born handball player has taken many titles home to her Hungarian club, Győri ETO KC. While she is a member of the Brazilian national handball team, she was also given Hungarian citizenship in 2018.

In 2014, she was elected the best handball player of the world.<sup>30</sup> Daniela de Oliveira Piedade, another handball player who has been on the Brazilian national team, taking part in four Olympics (2004, 2008, 2012, 2016) and played in two Hungarian clubs between 2014 and 2017 (Siófok KC, Fehérvár KC). In soccer, the best-known Brazilian player in the Hungarian first division is Paulo Vinícius Souza dos Santos. Originally from São Paulo, he now plays in MOL Vidi FC (Székesfehérvár).<sup>31</sup> Another Paulista, Isael da Silva Barbosa has been contracted to Ferencváros TC, one of the oldest soccer clubs of the Hungarian capital.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, Ronaldo de Assis Moreira (known as Ronaldinho) accepted a role as the honorary ambassador of Teqball, a table tennis like ball sport, invented in Hungary.<sup>33</sup>

As for Hungarians on the Brazilian sports scene, the diaspora plays a crucial role. János (João) Schiffer remembers fondly of his time as member of the volleyball team of the Club Athletico Paulistano. Mr Schiffer started his volleyball career in the team of the University of Gödöllő in Hungary, and after a brief detour to swimming he went back to volleyball after his arrival in São Paulo, and played in the Paulistano for five years, collecting a São Paulo state championship title. Fencing was another sport in which members of the Hungarian diaspora, such as Gábor Becht, Vera Vajda, Andor Hévei and his daughter Mariann Hévei competed with good results. Some of the diaspora athletes went on to train future generations, like fencing master Sándor Kiss, or João Schiffer himself, who works as a judo coach. This points to the potential sport could have in the building of intercommunity and even international bonds, in which the Hungarians living in Brazil could play a crucial role.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> O Dia, ‘Duda Amorim é eleita a melhor jogadora do mundo de handebol em 2014’, February 25, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> 24.hu, ‘Letette az állampolgársági esküt a Vidi brazil és bosnyák születésű játékosa’, March 10, 2017.

<sup>32</sup> Nemzetisport.hu, ‘FTC: gólerős brazil támadót igazolt a klub – hivatalos’, February 1, 2019.

<sup>33</sup> Petőfi Rádió, ‘A Teqball nagykövet Ronaldinho Budapesten’, December 6, 2019; M Grez and T Collins, ‘Teqball: What Ronaldinho did next’, CNN, August 5, 2019.

<sup>34</sup> Email exchange with János (João) Schiffer, May 2019.

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Bartłomiej Znojek

## Chapter 3

### Poland and Brazil

Latin America has never been a prominent area in Polish foreign policy, but looking at the individual countries in the region, Brazil traditionally has been one of Poland's main partners. Economic cooperation and a large number of Brazilians with Polish origin (more than 2 million as per very rough and disputed estimates) have been main factors for both countries' mutual interest. Nevertheless, the intensity and scope of Polish–Brazilian relations have been limited even though both sides repeatedly have been raising claims over unleashed potential in bilateral contacts.<sup>1</sup>

While commercial links have been gradually expanding at least in the last two decades, both countries never went beyond being marginal trade and investment partners to each other. Unlike the commercial dimension, other areas of cooperation have not gained similar prominence. However, there were examples – especially in the last decade – of a greater interest in academic cooperation – built upon longstanding university contacts – as well as in defence, cultural and science areas.

The geographic distance can only partially explain why Poland and Brazil have not become major partners for each other and why they have been developing cooperation at such a low pace. The main factors would rather be: limited or none mutual knowledge, the divergence of interests and hence few incentives for governments of both countries to seek for a more substantial relationship. Jair Bolsonaro's takeover as Brazil's President in January 2019 has raised some elevated interest on both sides to enhance bilateral cooperation. The basis for that has been a mutual perception of ideological and political affinities, for example,

<sup>1</sup> K Brudzińska and B Znojek, 'Poland and Brazil: Narrowing the Distance, Exploring Mutual Potential', *PISM Policy Paper*, no 46 (2012); B Znojek, 'Stosunki Polska–Brazylia. Stan i perspektywy', in *Polska w wielobiegunowym świecie. Szanse i perspektywy rozwoju stosunków Polski z głównymi mocarstwami wschodzającymi*, ed. by A Gradziuk and P Kugiel (Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, 2012), 9–14.

the view of the role of nations, international order and priority character of relations with the U.S.

This article includes references to a longer historical perspective, but it pays main attention to the period after the Polish accession to the European Union (EU) in 2004 which has brought new instruments and opportunities in relations with Brazil.

### **3.1 Political and diplomatic cooperation**

Poland and Brazil officially established diplomatic relations on 27 May 1920 when Earl Ksawery Orłowski presented credential letters to the then President Epitacio Pessoa. The first representative of Brazil to Poland was Rinaldo de Lima e Silva, who officially started his mission on 3 June 1921. For Poland, these events were an important part of the process to rebuild its own statehood following 123 years of inexistence on the world maps, after neighbouring powers Austria, Prussia and Russia had finalised the partition of the Polish territory.

Brazil was one of the most vocal supporters of Poland's independence at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The key figure was a Brazilian statesman and intellectual Rui Barbosa, who made several calls during the Hague international conference in 1907 for a free and independent Poland. Once World War I ended in 1918, Brazil was one of the first countries to recognise the sovereignty of Poland.<sup>2</sup> By that date, tens of thousands of Poles – mostly poor peasants, escaping misery and looking for a decent life – had found their home in Brazil, whose authorities successfully attracted thousands of migrants from various European countries.

The official start of the Polish settlement wave to Brazil goes back to 1869 when the first group came to Brusque (Santa Catarina) at the initiative of a Polish-born local leader Edmund Woś-Saporski.<sup>3</sup> The peak came during 1890–1914 with more than 100,000 arrivals. It is estimated, that in the period between World War

<sup>2</sup> J Mazurek, *Brasil e a Polônia – 90 anos das relações diplomáticas*, trans. by J Szeptycki, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Brazil, 2009; J Mazurek, 'O Brasil e a independência da Polônia em 1918', *Revista del CESLA*, no 20 (2017), 157–164. On 17 August 1918, Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs Nilo Peçanha sent a note to Paulo Claudel, French envoy in Rio de Janeiro to confirm that Brazil "considers that creating a unified and independent Poland is one of the conditions of the peace". Official recognition came on 19 April 1919.

<sup>3</sup> M Kula, *Polono–Brazylijczycy i parę kwestii im bliskich* (Warszawa: Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego, Instytut Studiów Iberyjskich i Iberoamerykańskich UW, 2012); T Pindel, Za

I and II, 40,000 Poles arrived in Brazil. The last substantial immigration flow came during World War II and years after it ended, with around 20,000–30,000 immigrants – the group included displaced individuals mainly.<sup>4</sup>

At present, the descendants of the Polish immigrants are Brazilians in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> generation fully integrated with the Brazilian society. Their number is often placed at 1 per cent of the overall population, hence about 2 million as per rough calculation. They are mainly present in the southern states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Paraná – its capital, Curitiba, used to be called the capital of the Brazilian–Polish community.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the Brazilian diaspora in Poland in 2017 was estimated at 1,500 people, the largest such group in Central and Eastern Europe – including also Russia.<sup>6</sup>

After World War II, Brazil recognised the Communist Government in Poland, but the bilateral political dialogue during further decades was marked by various difficulties and general distrust. While there was a boost in bilateral agreements at the beginning of 1960, the military coup in Brazil in 1964 negatively affected the cooperation. Independently, commercial contacts have gradually developed especially after 1975,<sup>7</sup> but one of the side-effects was a long-overdue debt Poland had with Brazil.

The debt issue known as the *polonetas* scandal had its roots in the years 1977–1980 when Brazil conceded an export credit line to Poland to boost its trade. The sum due to be paid was rising and Poland turned not to be able to start paying the debt until 1992. That year, the new democratic government struck a deal with Brazil (and other creditors from the Paris Club of the lenders) on

*horyzont: Polaków latynoamerykańskie przygody* (Kraków: Społeczny Instytut Wydawniczy Znak, 2018).

<sup>4</sup> J Mazurek (ed.), *Brazylia i Polska – daleko acz blisko. W 80. Rocznicę nawiązania stosunków dyplomatycznych*. Informator do wystawy (Warsaw: Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego, 2001); K Smolana, ‘Polskie dziedzictwo kulturowe w Brazylii’, *Cenne, Bezczenne, Utracone* 84, no 3–85, no 4 (2015), 79–80.

<sup>5</sup> Z Malczewski, ‘Os poloneses e seus descendentes no Brasil: esboço histórico e situação atual da colônia polonesa no Brasil’. *Polonicus*, January 20, 2016; M Kawka, ‘A presença polonesa no Brasil’, in *Relações entre Polônia e Brasil. Passado e presente*, ed. by A Dembicz and M Kula, trans. by A Gonçalves (Warsaw: Centro de Estudos Latino-Americanos Universidade de Varsóvia, 1996), 39–52; Kula, *Polono–Brazylijczycy*.

<sup>6</sup> A Leoni, *Relatório de gestão*, 2018, 6.

<sup>7</sup> D Ostrowska, ‘Relações políticas polono–brasileiras’, in *Relações entre Polônia e Brasil. Passado e presente*, ed. by A Dembicz and M Kula, trans. by A Gonçalves (Warsaw: Centro de Estudos Latino-Americanos Universidade de Varsóvia, 1996), 53–62.

a 50 per cent reduction of the existing liabilities. The repayments, however, were gradual and in small instalments. In 2001, Poland returned 300 million USD out of 3.8 billion USD due and Brazil authorities started to consider to sell the debt because of budgetary needs.<sup>8</sup> In October 2001, the Brazilian Central Bank and the Polish Ministry of Finance agreed for a one-time payment of 2,458 billion to close the case (the date to pay the whole amount was due in 2009).<sup>9</sup> Even though Poland had paid the debt, the *polonetas* case had a lasting negative impact on the Brazilian business perception and trust towards the country.

Referring to Poland's foreign policy since the beginning of the transition to democracy, subsequent Polish governments agreed that joining NATO and the EU was a priority for Poland. After gaining membership to both blocs (on 12 March 1999 and 1 May 2004, respectively) Polish decision-makers focused on intensifying cooperation with main transatlantic and other European partners (non-EU neighbours included) and not necessarily looking at less-explored countries and regions. Nevertheless, the membership in the EU has provided Poland with new conditions and platform to develop relations with various international partners.

In case of Latin America, the summits the EU held with the region and separately with Brazil (since 2007) allowed for regular high-level contacts, but in case of Poland and Brazil, they have not translated into a greater mutual interest. The EU–Mercosur trade talks, which would potentially create a preferential trade framework between both countries, were not free of divergent views. Poland belongs to a group of EU members, which has long raised concerns over potentially negative consequences to their agricultural sectors from opening the EU market to Mercosur agri-food products. It, however, did not oppose the finalisation of negotiations on the trade deal in June 2019.

Polish governments, however, never aspired to build the status of a preferred partner for Brazil in Europe. Likewise, Brazilian governments have never seen Poland as an individual important partner inside the EU, as they used to do in case of the biggest members of the bloc such as France, Germany or Italy. The approach of the Bolsonaro Government stays in contrast to the hitherto approach as it singled out Poland as an important partner in Europe. Nevertheless,

<sup>8</sup> Agencia do Estado, 'Governo quer vender créditos das “polonetas”', *Estadão*, October 1, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Reuters, 'Polônia acerta pagamento de US\$ 2,458 bi de polonetas ao Brasil', *Folha de S. Paulo*, October 29, 2001.

it remains unclear yet how much that interest would be exploited by both sides to enhance bilateral cooperation.

One could argue that it was only with the 2008 financial crisis that Polish decision-makers became eventually aware of the need to look beyond traditional economic partners and to support Polish business in engaging in less explored markets. In Latin America, Brazil became the first choice.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, such priority treatment would not last long mainly because of the disappointing experience of Polish companies, which had struggled with the non-tariff barriers on the Brazilian market. Last years have seen interest shifting towards Mexico and the Pacific Alliance especially for the incumbent Polish government, which has been in power since November 2015 and won another 4-year term in October 2019.

### *3.1.1 Diplomatic presence*

Brazil used to be a country with the largest Polish diplomatic representation in Latin America but there have been reductions in the network for more than a decade. Apart from the embassy, there used to be three general consulates in Curitiba, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The government decided to close the last two in 2008 and 2013, respectively, as part of the austerity measures. At the same time, honorary consulates became the preferred option.<sup>11</sup> In 2019, there were four such representations in Belo Horizonte, Fortaleza, Manaus and São Paulo. In November 2010, a Defence Attaché was accredited in Brazil, first such Polish representative in Latin America.<sup>12</sup> However, Brazil's Military Attaché delegation has been present in Warsaw much earlier, since 1999.<sup>13</sup>

With regards to trade promotion, until early 2017, the main Polish governmental body responsible for that activity in Brazil was the Office for Trade and Investment Promotion (WPHI) in São Paulo. In Latin America, there was only one such additional entity in Argentina. WPHI was equipped with diplomatic status and managed by the ministry responsible for economy. In 2016,

<sup>10</sup> Brudzińska and Znojek, 'Poland and Brazil'.

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, *Wyzwania dla polityki zagranicznej RP wobec Ameryki Łacińskiej i Karaibów (2015–2020 i po 2020 roku)* (Warsaw, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> Brudzińska and Znojek, 'Poland and Brazil', 6.

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, 'Republic of Poland', 2018.

the Polish Government introduced a major reform of commercial promotion system. Changes consisted mainly of replacing the WPHI network with Foreign Trade Offices (ZBH in Polish), which could not have diplomatic status. WPHI in São Paulo has been closed since 2017, but the attempts to establish a ZBH instead started at the beginning of 2019 only. Till the end of that year, registration has not been concluded yet (reportedly because of procedural complexity). So far four ZBHs have been established in Latin America: the first one in Mexico in 2017, and the others in Buenos Aires, Bogota, Lima and Santiago de Chile.

*Table 1: List of missions of the Republic of Poland in Brazil in 2020*

Embassy/consulate	Representative office	Ambassador/Consul
Embassy of the Republic of Poland	Brasilia	Jakub Skiba
Consulate General of the Republic of Poland	Curitiba	Marta Olkowska
Honorary Consulate	Porto Alegre	Sérgio José Sechinski
Honorary Consulate	Manaus	José de Moura Teixeira Lopes
Honorary Consulate	Belo Horizonte	Sérgio Pitchon
Honorary Consulate	Fortaleza	Hanna Zborowska Neves
Honorary Consulate	São Paulo	Andrés Bukowinski

*Source:* Compiled by the author based on the data of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

### *3.1.2 Diplomatic and official contacts*

The Polish–Brazilian diplomatic relations have been marked by a low number of high-level official meetings, most of them at the occasion of multilateral summits, for example in the UN or the EU. In almost three decades, there were few official visits of the top representatives of both sides.<sup>14</sup> In 1995, President Lech Wałęsa visited Brazil as Poland's first head of state in the history of bilateral relations. In 2002, Fernando Henrique Cardoso came to Poland – the only such visit of a Brazilian head of state to date.<sup>15</sup> The same year, President Aleksander

<sup>14</sup> Znojek, ‘Stosunki Polska–Brazylia’.

<sup>15</sup> Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, already as Brazil's ex-president, visited Poland only in 2011 to receive the Lech Wałęsa Freedom Award in recognition to Brazil former head of state's efforts in tackling inequality.

Kwaśniewski travelled to Brazil – the last visit of a Polish head of state to that country. The next high-profile meeting took place on 16–17 September 2015 only, when the then Vice President Michel Temer visited Poland. The delegation included ministers responsible for mining and energy, defence, industry and trade, development, fisheries and agriculture, and tourism, as well as the secretaries on ports and civil aviation.

Since 1990, there were various official visits and meetings of the Polish prime minister<sup>16</sup> and ministers with Brazilian government representatives. Worth mentioning is the 1991 visit of the first Polish democratic Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski to several Latin American countries including Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and Brazil.<sup>17</sup> In August 2003, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz was the next Polish foreign minister to travel to Brazil. He met his counterpart – Celso Amorim – and asserted the positive impact of Poland's accession to the EU on the bilateral Polish–Brazilian relations.<sup>18</sup> Almost a decade had passed until Radosław Sikorski (Foreign Minister during 2007–2014) visited Brazil and met with his counterpart Antonio Patriota. In a speech at the University of São Paulo on 28 November 2012, Sikorski singled out energy and science, as potential areas of cooperation and called for closer cooperation of the EU with Brazil. He also supported the conclusion of the EU–Mercosur negotiations, but on condition that the bloc's countries would open up their markets.<sup>19</sup> In January 2019, Minister Jacek Czaputowicz represented the Polish Government at the presidential inauguration of Jair Bolsonaro. In March, Minister Krzysztof Szczerski, the chief of the Polish President's Chancellery visited Brazil. He met representatives of business and the Polish diaspora in São Paulo. Then, in Brasilia, he met various representatives of the Brazilian authorities, including

<sup>16</sup> In Poland, the president is the highest representative of the country, but it is the prime minister who leads the government. As per the Polish Constitution from 1997, the Council of Ministers conducts foreign and domestic policies.

<sup>17</sup> R Kuźniar (ed.), *Krzysztof Skubiszewski – dyplomata i mąż stanu* (Warszawa: Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, 2011), 588; K Szczepanik, A Herman-Łukasik and B Janicka (eds), *Stosunki dyplomatyczne polski. Informator. Tom II „Ameryka Północna i Południowa 1918–2007”* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych – Archiwum, 2018).

<sup>18</sup> M Senne de Moraes, 'Cimoszewicz minimiza polêmica com Lula em julho'. *Folha de S. Paulo*, August 19, 2003.

<sup>19</sup> R Sikorski, 'Wystąpienie Ministra Radosława Sikorskiego nt. relacji UE–Brazylia, Uniwersytet São Paulo', November 28, 2012.

Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo and President Bolsonaro's Chief Foreign Affairs Advisor Filipe Martins.

Concerning the official visits of the representatives of the Brazilian Government worth mentioning is the visit of Foreign Minister Celso Amorim to Warsaw in 2010 with such topics discussed as trade and military cooperation. In December of the same year, both countries signed a framework agreement on bilateral defence cooperation. It was the fourth such agreement of Poland with a non-European country after China, Vietnam and India. The document aimed at facilitating common army exercises, military education exchanges and cooperation of the defence industries.<sup>20</sup> Minister Aráujo visited Poland twice in his first 5 months in office. In February 2019, he participated in a Middle East Conference in Warsaw and was the only high-level government representative from Latin America. In May, he paid a working visit to Poland to explore potential areas of enhanced cooperation.

Inter-governmental political consultations at the level of vice-ministers of foreign affairs have served as the main mechanism for regular Polish–Brazilian official contacts. The format, which is also used in Poland relations with other Latin American countries, aimed at assessing the state of bilateral relations, identify the issues of common interest and define the basic directions for further cooperation. There have been various such meetings between Poland and Brazil to date. The first was held in February 1993 in Warsaw. In May 2018, the delegation headed by the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Marek Magierowski visited Brazil. He participated at an event organised by the Industry Federation of the State of São Paulo (FIESP) and inaugurated an honorary consulate in the same city. The next consultations took place in Warsaw in August 2019 on the state of relations and preparations to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations. Brazil's delegation was headed by the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Kenneth Haczynski da Nóbrega.

Diplomatic exchanges are complemented by a parliamentary dimension. In Poland, traditionally the Senate – the higher chamber of the Parliament – has been responsible for looking after Polish communities abroad and Brazil, with a large Polish diaspora, naturally has been attracting attention. Bilateral groups set up by the members of parliament are another way of fostering relations with other countries. The Polish–Brazilian group at the previous parliamentary term

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Defence of Poland, 'Minister Obrony Brazylii z wizytą w Polsce', December 2, 2010.

(2015–2019) had 19 members from both chambers. In the current legislature, inaugurated in November 2019, the group has 12 members and was established a year later only. An equivalent body also exists in the Brazilian Congress.

Cooperation at local authorities' level remains an interesting but less explored dimension of bilateral contacts. In the case of Brazil, partners from areas with a large presence of Polish descendants naturally have been the main linking point. Since the 1990s, there were various examples of cooperation, which did not necessarily remain active for long. First of all, there were city partnerships, for example, Kraków and Curitiba (1993), Warsaw and Rio de Janeiro (1997), Ostrołęka and Cafelândia (1999). One of the well-established cooperation has encompassed the Poznań District (*Powiat* in Polish) and the city of São José dos Pinhais, both continuously collaborating since 2003, for example in cultural and sports exchanges. At present, the Dolny Śląsk and Wielkopolska regions are the most active authorities of that level in cooperation with non-European local authorities. Both signed agreements with the state of Paraná (in 2006 and 2010 respectively). The latter region struck a deal with São Paulo in 2012 following several commercial missions sent to the city in previous years;<sup>21</sup> however, cooperation has become inactive.

Nevertheless, state governors in Brazil have been important contacts especially in seeking business opportunities. In 2010, Goiás Governor Alcides Rodriguez visited Poland and participated at a business promotion forum, as well as he met the representatives of the Wielkopolska region.<sup>22</sup> During his visit to Brazil in 2012, Minister Sikorski met with the Rio de Janeiro Governor Sergio Cabral and São Paulo Vice-Governor Guilherme Afif Domingos. In July 2015, a trade mission from Goiás state headed by Vice-Governor Jose Eliton de Figueiredo came to Warsaw with representatives of more than 20 firms.

The last interesting framework of cooperation between Poland with Brazil to be mentioned has to do with some efforts to institutionalise cooperation between the Visegrád Group (V4) and Brazil. In 2013, Slovakia hosted a V4–Brazil meeting in Bratislava on defence matters with the presence of Celso Amorim, the then Brazilian Minister of Defence.<sup>23</sup> In October 2015, political consultations

<sup>21</sup> A Skorupska and B Znojek, 'The Local Government Dimension of Relations between Poland and Latin America', *Bulletin PISM*, no 91 (October 2, 2017).

<sup>22</sup> Polish Investment and Trade Agency, 'Visit of the Governor of the Brazilian state Goias and a seminar devoted to the Polish–Brazilian co-operation', February 17, 2010.

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Defence of Poland, 'Ministrowie obrony V4 w Bratysławie', October 29, 2013.

between those partners took place in Brazil, and in November 2017 Budapest hosted the second meeting in this format.<sup>24</sup>

### **3.2 Economic relations**

The last three decades of Polish–Brazilian commercial relations have been marked by a quite steady increase in trade (tough with some fluctuations) and relatively slow progress in investment engagement. Poland's entry to the EU in 2004 did not work as a noticeable boost in Polish trade with Brazil. One of the reasons could be that there was no preferential agreement in place because EU–Mercosur trade negotiations have not been concluded. Notably, even the existing EU free trade deals with Mexico and Chile were not enough incentive for Polish business to look at Latin America with a greater interest. The vast majority of firms preferred to engage in nearby European markets instead of risking on less known and remote destinations. The sign of that was the fact that since 2000, Polish trade with the EU markets has been reaching around 70 per cent (80 per cent in case of exports).

#### *3.2.1 Trade*

Poland – Latin America trade has oscillated between 1 per cent and 1.25 per cent since 2000.<sup>25</sup> Brazil as Poland's top partner in the region had between 0.3 per cent and 0.4 per cent share in Polish total trade since 2002. The value of Polish–Brazilian trade raised from almost 363 million USD in 2000 to more than 1.9 billion USD in 2019. The top value of 2.3 billion USD was recorded in 2018. At the same time, there has been a deepening trade deficit on Poland's side with –215.9 million in 2000 and –1.1 billion USD in 2018. In 2000, Poland exported

<sup>24</sup> ‘Defesa vai ampliar cooperação com países europeus’, October 31, 2013; ‘V4–Brazil meeting in Budapest’, November 21, 2017; P Kugiel, (ed.), *V4 Goes Global: Exploring Opportunities and Obstacles in the Visegrad Countries' Cooperation with Brazil, India, China and South Africa* (Warsaw: Polish Institute of International Affairs, 2016).

<sup>25</sup> The source for trade data was the UN Comtrade Database, unless other reference is stated. One needs to be aware that statistics on merchandise may vary depending on the source. Some products go through intermediaries for example in the Netherlands or Germany and are not necessarily included in Polish–Brazilian trade data.

goods worth 73.5 million USD to Brazil. In 2019, it was almost 435 million USD. In the same period, the value of the Polish import from Brazil totalled 289.4 million USD and 1.5 billion USD, respectively. Interestingly in the last few years, Mexico surpassed Brazil as the main Latin American market for Polish products, which may be explained by the relatively easier access to the Mexican market than to the Brazilian one.<sup>26</sup> During 2004–2019, Brazil was at best the 31<sup>st</sup> trade market globally for Poland.

In 2000, metal products were the top Polish export group to Brazil with a 34 per cent share (railway tracks made the most of it). Chemical products – chiefly fertilisers – made 25 per cent, and mineral products 11 per cent (coal and sulphur). In 2019, the most important goods in Polish exports to the Brazilian market were: electrical machines and equipment (28 per cent), automotive parts (11 per cent) as well as medicines and rubber products (nearly 9 per cent).

Embraer aircrafts has long been a top position in the Polish import from Brazil. In 2000, they accounted for 44 per cent of the value of goods bought by Poland. Other significant positions were iron ore (13 per cent), followed by orange juice (9 per cent) and tobacco (5 per cent). In 2019, copper ore (19 per cent), soybean oil cakes (14 per cent), aircrafts (13 per cent), tobacco (11 per cent) and car parts (9 per cent).

Some products could be sold to Brazil only after a long certification process, which required to host and pay for inspections by Brazilian health authorities. For example, since 2011 Poland has strived to obtain homologation for the dairy products and has accomplished it only in the second half of 2014 (it was the first EU country with such a certificate). During September and October 2018, Brazilian inspectors from the Agricultural Ministry visited Poland to check milk and meat producers and potentially broaden the list of entities allowed to export to Brazil. Another product subject to the procedure was apples. Poland presented an official request to Brazilian authorities in October 2014 to get certification for the fruits, but the case has not been resolved for the next years.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland, ‘Notatka informacyjna n/t polsko-brazylijskich stosunków gospodarczych’, April 30, 2019.

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland, ‘Notatka informacyjna o polsko-brazylijskich stosunkach gospodarczych’, November 4, 2016.

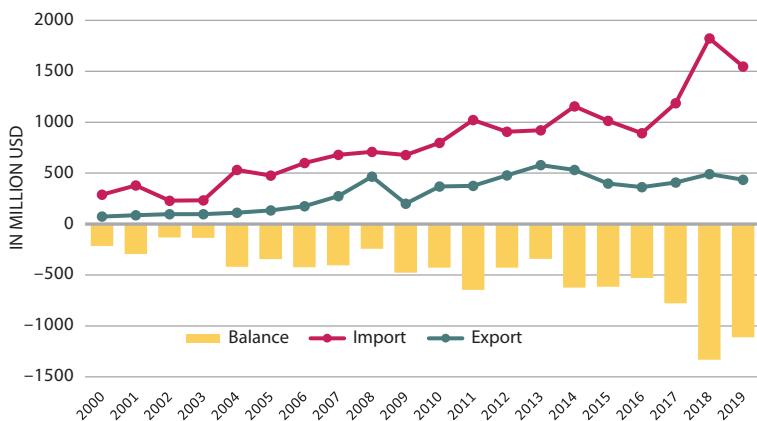


Figure 1: Polish trade in goods with Brazil 2000–2018 (in million USD)

Source: UN Comtrade Database, s. a.

Poland is the main Central and Eastern European market for Brazil's products, but its share in the total Brazilian trade is very low. Embraer planes have long had been a strong position in Polish–Brazilian trade. In 2000 they made 44 per cent of the Polish import from Brazil (in 2018 planes, in general, had 20 per cent share). Orange juice, tobacco, soy-processing residues were also included as top imported goods. In 2018, top products imported by Poland – apart from planes – included copper and iron ores, vehicles, residuals from soybean processing, tobacco, as well as such food products as coffee, fruit juices and tropical fruits.

As of May 2019, Embraer fleet used by the Polish national airline LOT included the following models: 170 (6 units), 175 (12), 190 (4), 195 (12). During 1999–2002 Embraer ERJ-145 was introduced and 14 machines in total served until 2011. In March 2004, E170 joined the LOT fleet,<sup>28</sup> in 2005 the airline decided to buy further units, model 175. Six of them were used and have been leased in April 2018.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> 'LOT: Nowy Embraer już dziś w Polsce', September 2, 2009.

<sup>29</sup> 'LOT: Pierwszy z sześciu zamówionych Embraerów już obsługuje połączenia', April 16, 2018.

### 3.2.2 Foreign direct investments

Poland has been a destination for very few Latin American direct investments. The only major one from Brazil has long referred to the IT company Stefanini, which entered the Polish market (and others) in 2010 with the acquisition of Tech Team Global. In 2020, a gaming industry consultancy company Gameplan was the second Brazilian firm to enter the Polish market. According to the Brazil National Bank data, the capital inflow to Poland from Brazil in 2007 amounted to 2 million USD. In 2018, it was five times more, but with a peak of 14 million USD in 2015. In case of the number of direct investors, in 2007 only seven were registered. They were 35 in 2018, but again the peak was in 2015 with 51 investors.<sup>30</sup>

In comparison, Polish investment presence in Brazil, although not yet significant, it has become much more visible than the Brazilian one in Poland, especially since the beginning of the current decade. As per Brazilian data in 2010, 7 companies with Polish capital were registered in Brazil. In 2015 it was 16 firms in total.<sup>31</sup>

According to the data by the National Bank of Poland (NBP), Polish FDI stock in Brazil amounted to 0.1 million USD in 1999–2001 and 0.2 million USD in 2004. After a peak in 2012 (50.8 million USD) the stock decreased more than twofold. It significantly recovered in 2017 to 45.5 million USD and in 2019 it totalled a record value of 52.6 million USD. The share of the Polish FDI stock in Brazil compared to Poland's total FDI stock has been very slowly increasing, but still, it was a fraction. It was below 0.1 per cent until 2013, and then it had 0.21 per cent in 2019 as the highest share to date.<sup>32</sup>

When it comes to the Polish companies engaged in Brazil, in 1998 Selena – chemical and construction material producer – entered that market and has been operating a factory of polyurethane foam in Ponta Grossa (Paraná). Komandor, a furniture manufacturer, has been there since 2000; however, the Brazilian unit was established by Komandor's Canadian subsidiary with Brazilian partners and was not treated as Polish investment in Brazil's official statistics.

<sup>30</sup> Banco Central do Brasil, 'CBE – Capitais brasileiros no exterior', 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Banco Central do Brasil, 'Censo de capitais estrangeiros no País', 2017.

<sup>32</sup> National Bank of Poland, 'Inwestycje bezpośrednie – polskie', 2019.

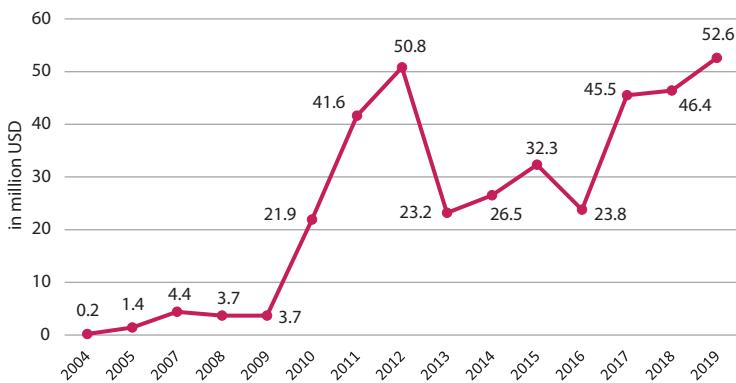


Figure 2: Polish foreign direct investment stock in Brazil 2004–2019 (in million USD)

Source: National Bank of Poland, 'Inwestycje bezpośrednie – polskie', s. a.

A vehicle part producer Boryszew has been present in Brazil through the Maflow brand since 2010 and has been supplying Brazilian and Argentine car factories. Since 2011 eSky, online air travel search and booking services provider has been operating in Brazil under the name of eDestinos. The same year Medcom, producer of energy-electronic equipment, for example, for public transport vehicles, opened its office in Brazil. It won a contract to modernise São Paulo metro trains. In 2012, LUG Light Factory, a manufacturer of LED systems, established a commercial office in São Paulo. However, difficulties it experienced in doing business in Brazil were behind a decision to engage more in Argentina, where they built a factory. In 2013, Polish capital-owned Quero Passagem – an online bus ticket-buying platform – was launched in Brazil.<sup>33</sup>

In 2014, Polish synthetic rubber producer Synthos – an important exporter of the product to Brazil – announced plans to build a factory in Trunfo (Rio Grande do Sul), but in December of the same year, the company cancelled the plans. Delays and supplying issue were mentioned as the reason. Possibly, the anti-dumping procedure, which Brazil launched in May 2014 for the synthetic rubber from the EU had influenced the decision. In November 2015, the Foreign Trade Council (CAMEX) decided not to go ahead with the anti-dumping measures

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland, 'Notatka informacyjna', 2016.

in this case.<sup>34</sup> Synthos announced renewed interest in the investment in 2018. Bioton – a Polish biotechnology company – has defined Brazil as a strategic market. In 2014, it reached an agreement with the Brazilian biotech company Biomma as exclusive holder of the right to register Bioton-produced human insulin in Brazil. The registration attempt failed and in 2019 Biomma terminated the agreement forcing Bioton to look for alternative ways to commercialise its product on the Brazilian market.

In 2014, Comarch – one of the largest Polish IT companies – entered the Brazilian market as a provider of solutions chosen by a U.S. company, which won a telecom contract. Interestingly, since March 2015, Comarch has been collaborating with the Brazilian National Institute of Telecommunications (Inatel) providing Brazilian IT specialists with training and apprenticeship opportunities.

In 2016 Can-Pack, a Polish producer of metal packages started the construction of a can factory in Brazil and signed a deal with Companhia Siderúrgica Nacional (CSN) to purchase 100 per cent of CSN's subsidiary Companhia Metalic Nordeste in Fortaleza. It currently operates can factories in Maracanáu (Ceará) and Itumbiara (Goiás) – both officially opened in April 2018.<sup>35</sup>

Another noteworthy investment is Eco Estrelas a luxury tourist resort project in Baía Formosa (Rio Grande do Norte) owned by Gremi, a Polish private equity company controlled by Grzegorz Hajdarowicz (also a Brazil's honorary consul in Poland). They bought the land back in 2009, and the resort project is due to be finalised in 2021. The direct investor is an entity registered in Luxemburg, so it is not necessarily treated as a Polish investment.

### *3.2.3 Commercial cooperation promotion*

The importance of the economic area in Polish–Brazilian relations has been translating into various initiatives aimed at fostering mutual business community interest. Trade missions, business forums, “doing-business-in” seminars became quite common means in this regard.

The last few years have shown a growing interest of Polish governments in organising economic missions along with official governmental visits. For example,

<sup>34</sup> Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland, ‘Notatka informacyjna’, 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Can-Pack, ‘Announcement’, August 24, 2016; Can-Pack, ‘Grand opening of new factories in Brazil’, April 30, 2018.

in 2012 Minister Sikorski came to Brazil with representatives of about 50 companies from transport, infrastructure, chemical, energy, offshore and consumer product sectors. Another format were bilateral business forums, like the one organised in Poland during Vice President Temer's visit in 2015.

It is worth highlighting that various non-state agents have been supporting Polish–Brazilian business contacts. Such entities operated already in the 1930s, what reflected the Polish immigration activity in Brazil, for example, the Polish–Brazilian Chamber of Commerce established in 1934. In the 1990s such bodies appeared in both countries. The Polish–Brazilian Chamber of Commerce in Poland was one of them, but it became inactive more than a decade ago. For the last few years, the Polish–Portuguese Chamber of Commerce has taken a lead in promoting the Brazilian market as part of a broadened activity towards Portuguese-speaking markets. It has coordinated regular trade missions to Brazil twice a year (the last one to São Paulo in October 2019) and business events like a seminar on Brazilian market co-organised with the Embassy of Brazil in July 2018 in Warsaw. The Polish Chamber of Commerce (KIG) is another entity, which organised initiatives related to the Brazil, but rather as part of a broad promotional activity towards various markets, not only in Latin America.

The last decade has also seen specific initiatives carried out by governments and non-governmental bodies which brought, however, mixed results. With the rise of interest in business engagement abroad at the beginning of the 2010s, Brazil has been naturally seen as the priority Latin American market for Poland. The confirmation of that was a government programme launched in 2012 and aimed at boosting interest in a few prospective emerging markets. Brazil was selected as one of five such destinations – next to Algeria, Canada, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan – eligible for governmental funding to the Polish companies interested in entering these markets. At the same time, a sectorial programme dedicated to financial support activity in 15 most prospective business branches indirectly facilitated engagement in Brazil. However, the difficulties some Polish firms have experienced when trying to enter that market (time, cost and bureaucratic barriers among others) apparently led to excluding Brazil from the 2017–2019 edition of the programme.<sup>36</sup>

Missed expectations were also a case on Brazil's side. In January 2007, the Brazilian Government chose Warsaw to install a merchandise distribution centre

<sup>36</sup> In 2013, Mexico was added to the list of the most prospective markets for Poland, and after excluding Brazil it is currently the only Latin American economy in the programme, which can partly be explained by Poland's greater interest in cooperation with the Pacific Alliance bloc.

of Brazilian products for Central and Eastern Europe. The next year, the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency (PAIiIZ) and Apex Brasil signed a cooperation agreement on commercial promotion. In September 2009, the Apex office replaced the Warsaw distribution centre, but not for long. In 2011, the Brazilian Government decided to close it and centralise actions in Europe from an office in Brussels. That would follow a conclusion that setting up a separate office in Poland was a premature decision, which did not bring the desired benefits.

Other initiatives to facilitate business contacts included also a dialogue on the favourable legal framework. One of the issues frequently raised by Polish business representatives was the lack of a double taxation avoidance agreement, seen by them as a significant barrier for investment in Brazil. In June 2013, the Polish Ministry of Finance submitted to Brazil a proposal on double taxation avoidance agreement. It took until July 2015 for the Brazilian Federal Tax Office to respond and accept the offer to negotiate the accord. Given Brazil's generally negative stance towards this kind of agreements, it was seen as an important achievement and exception in the case of Poland. The first round of talks concluded in August 2015, but there was no final arrangement during the next years.<sup>37</sup> As per the author's discussions with Brazilian diplomats, progress finally has been made under Bolsonaro's government and the document entered the parliament's agenda.

It is important to highlight the context of the EU–Mercosur trade talks, which were concluded in June 2019. The negotiations were not necessarily a major point of public interest and debate in Poland. The topic mainly gathered the attention of the agri-food sector – and the news media specialised in it – because they were concerned over the negative impact of the opening of the EU market for Mercosur producers. One of the main adverse effects expected will be the loss of competitiveness of the Polish beef and poultry exports to other EU markets when cheaper Mercosur meat is available there. The Polish governments continuously declared support for trade liberalisation between EU and Mercosur countries but shared the concerns of the Polish farmers. At the same time, they echoed expectations of the industrial sector to have better access to Argentina and the Brazil markets, in particular. Polish companies interested in the Mercosur markets are looking for the entry of the EU–Mercosur deal as a way to improve conditions for doing business.

<sup>37</sup> Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology of Poland, 'Notatka informacyjna', 2016.

### 3.3 Cultural, educational and scientific cooperation

#### 3.3.1 Historical migration legacy and main personalities

The Polish–Brazilian relations have seen dozens of important personalities, in particular in the decades of the massive immigration to Brazil.<sup>38</sup> Here only some of them will be mentioned. It is valid to first mention Edmund Woś-Saporski, who is commonly called the father of the Polish immigration to Brazil because of his pioneer efforts in bringing the first settlers to that country in 1869.<sup>39</sup>

Professor Julian Szymański, Marshall of the Senate 1928–1930 had its mark in bilateral relations as a founder of the Polish–Brazilian Society of Ruy Barbosa (based in Warsaw and active until today under a shorter name). Szymański was an ophthalmologist by profession and lived in Brazil during 1912–1921. He worked at the Federal University of Curitiba and authored the first manual for the students of ophthalmology. In 1918, he decided to return to Poland – his descendants live in Brazil.

It is symptomatic that there were influential Polish names in the art and culture of Brazil.<sup>40</sup> It was both about Poles who moved to Brazil (also temporarily) in some moment of their life and Brazilians with Polish roots. During World War II, several intellectuals found temporary shelter in Brazil, among them acclaimed Polish poets: Kazimierz Wierzyński and Julian Tuwim, who spent some time in Rio de Janeiro. Tuwim included impressions from his stay in Brazil in one of his most renowned poems: *Kwiaty polskie* [The Polish Flowers].

In 1941, drama actor and director, Zbigniew Ziembinski arrived in Brazil. He swiftly gained credits as a founder of contemporary theatre in Brazil, especially because of promoting plays written by Brazilian authors. In 1943 he directed *Wedding Dress* by Nelson Rodrigues, a drama play, which used to be quoted as a turning point in the Brazilian theatre history.<sup>41</sup> Another example was Yanka Rudzka, a Polish dancer who had an impact on professional dance in Brazil.

<sup>38</sup> Kula, *Polono–Brazylijczycy*; Z Malczewski, *Polonii brazylijskiej obraz własny. Zapiski emigranta (2007–2010)* (Warsaw: Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego, 2010).

<sup>39</sup> Kawka, ‘A presença’; J Mazurek, ‘Ziemia obiecana. Z dziejów osadnictwa polskiego w Brazylii, in *Brazylia i Polska – daleko, lecz blisko (w 80 rocznicę nawiązania stosunków dyplomatycznych)*, ed. by J Mazurek (Warsaw: Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego, 2001), 41–57; Pindel, *Za horyzont*.

<sup>40</sup> A Pluta, ‘Traces of Polish Culture in Brazil’, trans. by A Aniskiewicz, 2016.

<sup>41</sup> A Pluta, ‘Zbigniew Ziembinski’, trans. by A Micińska, 2015.

She moved to the country in the 1950s and settled in Salvador de Bahia where she founded an influential dance school.<sup>42</sup>

Among Brazilians with Polish origin, Paulo Leminski is worth mentioning. He was a celebrated Brazilian poet, writer and songwriter for various artists of *Música Popular Brasileira* (MPB). In his art, he included various references to Poland.<sup>43</sup> Another example of a Polish descendant is Jaime Lerner, architect, urban planner and a three-time mayor of Curitiba. He is known for projects aimed at making the city more sustainable, amongst others, with improvements to public transportations.<sup>44</sup>

In the area of visual arts, it is also worth mentioning Andrés Bukowinski, known in Brazil as an acclaimed director of advertising films. He was born in Poland in 1940 and settled in Argentina with his parents a few years later. He was raised and started his career in that country, but in 1973 he moved to Brazil. Currently, he is Poland's Honorary Consul in São Paulo.

The selection of personalities important for Polish–Brazilian relations should not omit the main figures active in Polish–Brazilian communities in the last decades. One of the most praised is Father Zdzisław Malczewski from the Society of Christ. He has lived in Brazil since 1979 and gained a prominent role in the Polish–Brazilian diaspora as an author of books and editor of magazines dedicated to both countries and bilateral relations. Another important personality is Professor Henryk Siewierski, who came to Brazil in 1985. He later became the Head of the Department of Literature at the University of Brasilia. Siewierski authored many books on Polish and Brazilian literature, as well as translated into Portuguese such Polish authors as Bruno Schulz and Andrzej Szczypiorski. It is also worth mentioning Tadeusz Łychowski, painter and poet who cooperated with Siewierski and authored various volumes of Polish–Portuguese poetry. He translated poems of such Polish authors as Julia Hartwig, Ewa Lipska, Ryszard Krynicki and Karol Wojtyła (future Pope John Paul II).<sup>45</sup>

The history of Polish immigration to Brazil has had a lasting impact on the social dimension of Polish–Brazilian relations. It brought a robust cultural and social life, which included journals or educational institutions in the first decades of the 1990s. In the last decades, it has been one of the main bases for gradual

<sup>42</sup> M Różalski, 'Yanka Rudzka', trans. by A Micińska, 2016.

<sup>43</sup> A Pluta, 'Paulo Leminski', trans. by B Nikolova, 2015.

<sup>44</sup> A Pluta, 'Jaime Lerner', trans. by Z Wiśniewska, 2015.

<sup>45</sup> 'Trzej Polacy z Brazylii z Nagrodą Literacką', November 8, 2016.

intensification of social contacts, but also general interest (mostly among Polish people towards Brazil), which fuelled various projects aimed at narrowing the mutual knowledge gap. In 2019, the Polish Parliament expanded the eligibility of the so-called Karta Polaka [Pole's Card] to all Polish descendants worldwide (before, it had been restricted to some countries only). The Card confirms that a foreigner belongs to the Polish nation, but it is not equivalent to citizenship and is aimed to facilitate travel to Poland and boost interest in the country. The document's holder has various rights in Poland, for example, no-fee visa, easier access to permanent residence or work permit.

### 3.3.2 Cultural dimension

The diplomatic and consular missions have mainly conducted Poland's official cultural promotion in Brazil.<sup>46</sup> They used to do it rather on a low scale through concerts, exhibitions or movie shows. Among cyclical events, it is worth mentioning the Festival of the Polish Cinema organised since 2009.<sup>47</sup> For example, the September 2019 edition was dedicated to Poland's 30 years of democracy.

The Polish Institute – the main external cultural promotion body established in more than 20 locations worldwide – is not present in Latin America. Nevertheless, Brazil has been the only Latin American country to date to be part of a long-term cultural promotion initiative with the “Brazil Project” held in 2016 and managed by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute (IAM) – the national institution responsible for cultural promotion and cooperation, which involved a series of various activities. The project included the presentation of a show *(A)pollonia* directed by Krzysztof Warlikowski during the International Theatre Presentation MITsp in São Paulo. The project *Yanka Rudzka: Zaczyn* could be seen on the dance festival Vivadança in Salvador de Bahia. São Paulo cinema CineSesc presented the work of two famous Polish movie directors: Honorary Oscar winner Andrzej Wajda (project *Wajda turns 90*) as well as of Krzysztof Kieślowski. Iza Tarasewicz presented her works on the São Paulo Art Biennial. In the Casa do Povo cultural centre, the installation *Refúgio Polonês* by architect Jakub Szczeńny

<sup>46</sup> Compared to the official activities realised by Polish diplomats in Brazil, the Embassy of Brazil in Warsaw has not been very active in this area (it used to patronage mostly events organised by other entities). The main reason was apparently reduced resources.

<sup>47</sup> ‘Mostra de Cinema Polonês – 100 anos da Reconquista da Independência da Polônia’, 2018.

was shown. Additionally, the Polish group Mitch & Mitch played concerts with Brazilian Orquestra Imperial.<sup>48</sup>

Both in Poland and Brazil, there are various non-governmental organisations engaged in promoting bilateral contacts. The Polish–Brazilian Society established in 1929 is one of the oldest such organisations in Poland and has been focusing on commemorating the common history of both countries, events and personalities through conferences and exhibitions. It closely cooperated with the Museum of the Polish Popular Movement History in Warsaw which used to host and support exhibitions related to Polish immigration to Brazil. Another partner of the Polish–Brazilian Society has been the 50<sup>th</sup> Liceum of Rui Barbosa – the only secondary school in Poland with Portuguese in its curriculum. It is also worth mentioning the Macunaima Foundation, which has been actively promoting Brazilian culture in Poland. Their main contribution was the cyclical *Bom Dia Brasil* festival. Organised since the mid-2010s, the event had 17 editions – the last one in September 2021. Another organisation active in promoting Brazil is the Terra Brasilis Foundation, which, for example, organised events or whose members commented on topics related to Brazilian culture and the current situation in the country.

In Brazil, there were various organisations established mainly by the Polish-descendant communities. In 1989, Polbras was created and a year later Braspol was established, both aimed to unite various initiatives at the local level. Currently, only the latter of the two remains active.<sup>49</sup> Polish immigrants dominantly of peasant origin left their mark in terms of the importance of the cultivation of the Catholic religion and folklore in various local communities. For example, there are numerous Polish folklore dance groups in Brazil.<sup>50</sup>

In 2011, the Casa da Cultura Polônia Brasil was established in Curitiba in cooperation with the Tadeusz Kościuszko Polish–Brazilian Society (the oldest such organisation devoted to bilateral relations which was created in 1889). In mid-2017, the first issue of the *Boletim Tak!* in Portuguese was published by Casa da Cultura.<sup>51</sup> Important examples of periodical publications include especially *Projeções* replaced by *Polonicus* both edited by Father Malczewski.

<sup>48</sup> Adam Mickiewicz Institute, ‘Programmes: Brazil Project’, 2016.

<sup>49</sup> Braspol, ‘História’, 2018.

<sup>50</sup> Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Curitiba, ‘Grupy folklorystyczne i chóry’, 2018.

<sup>51</sup> Casa da Cultura Polônia Brasil, ‘Quem somos’, s. a.

The magazines were built on active publishing tradition within Polish immigrants during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>52</sup>

In a broader context, the activity of Father Malczewski should be considered an integral part of the mission of the Polish Catholic Church present in Brazil. The first priests arrived in Brazil at the beginning of the largest Polish immigration wave, and various missionary orders established their presence in that country – first to come was the order of the Divine Word Missionaries at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The missionaries have played an important role not only in integrating Polish communities but also documenting their life. With generations of Polish descendants more assimilated in Brazilian society, Polish missions have been focusing more on working with Brazilian catholic communities.<sup>53</sup> Currently, Polish historians of Brazilian immigration such as Krzysztof Smolana have tried to work on preserving the immigration archives in Brazil.

There were two interesting initiatives aimed at the Brazilian–Polish community in Poland. The School of Leaders foundation led a programme dedicated to local community leaders from various Polish diasporas abroad. The initiative consisted of inviting a selected group of participants for a short stay in Poland to learn about the country, integrate and be incentivised to run their own initiatives in their local communities in home countries. The project for Brazilian leaders took place in 2010–2012 and 2014.<sup>54</sup> The other initiative was introduced in 2010 by the Wspólnota Polska society – a publicly-funded foundation focused on supporting Polish diasporas abroad – under the name *Czas na Polskę* [Time for Poland]. Several volunteers were sent to Latin America, including Brazil, to teach Polish language and publish reports from their travels online.<sup>55</sup>

### 3.3.3 Academic dimension

Poland and Brazil have had decades of cooperation in higher education. The Centre for Latin American Studies (CESLA) created at the University of Warsaw in 1988 was one of the most active academic institutions in promoting cooperation

<sup>52</sup> Z Malczewski, ‘Apresentação’, 2012.

<sup>53</sup> Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Curitiba, ‘Polskie duchowieństwo’, s. a.; Z Malczewski, *Missionários Poloneses*, 2001.

<sup>54</sup> Szkoła Liderów, ‘Raport z działalności w 2014 roku’, 2016, 21.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Czas na Polskę: Wolontariusze wyruszają’, December 12, 2011.

with Latin American partners. CESLA academics co-authored books on Polish–Brazilian relations (for example cultural seminars in 1989 or a book on various aspects of bilateral relations) and organised several events related to Brazil.<sup>56</sup>

Brazilian students make the largest Latin American group at Polish universities, but their number is relatively small. For example, in 2004 there were 23 students from Brazil out of the 71-strong Latin American group. In 2019 it was 122 out of about 430.<sup>57</sup> Only since recently there has been some state-funded scholarship to study in Poland. Earlier it was rather a matter of the agreements between individual universities. In 2013, Brazil's National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) signed an agreement with the Polish Conference of the Deans for Academic Schools (KRASP) on participation in *Ciência sem Fronteiras* programme established by the Brazilian Government in 2011. As per Brazilian data during 2015–2016, Polish universities received 32 students from Brazil. Biology, biomedicine and health fields were majors for almost the entire group.<sup>58</sup> Greater interest in attracting Latin American students can be seen by Polish academic institutions in the last few years. For example, KRASP created a post of a plenipotentiary for developing academic cooperation with Latin America.

One of the interesting initiatives combining science and business fields were Polish–Brazilian Conferences on Science and Technology. It was a common effort of the University of Brasilia and the Polish Aviation Institute based on an agreement signed in April 2015. The meetings aimed at fostering collaboration between scientists from the aerospace and energy sectors, industry and governmental agencies. Three editions have taken place to date.<sup>59</sup>

In 2009, Polish language studies were launched at the Paraná Federal University in Curitiba – first such course in Latin America. In April 2011, the Polish Studies Unit named by Cyprian Kamil Norwid was inaugurated at the University of Brasilia. It was aimed at fostering Brazilian–Polish cooperation in the area of human science and offered optional Polish language courses in the Institute of Literature's curriculum.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>56</sup> In 2017, CESLA was closed and its structures included in the Centre of American Studies of the University of Warsaw.

<sup>57</sup> Central Statistical Office, *Szkołnictwo wyższe i jego finanse w 2019 r. (Informacje statystyczne)* (Warsaw–Gdańsk, 2020).

<sup>58</sup> Leoni, *Relatório*, 6.

<sup>59</sup> '3. Polsko–Brazylijska Konferencja Nauki i Technologii', 2017.

<sup>60</sup> Cátedra Cyprian Norwid de Estudos Poloneses, Universidade de Brasília, 'Objetivos', s. a.

The cooperation does not limit to universities. The earlier mentioned Liceum Barbosa has had close cooperation with Brazilian counterparts including frequent visits of the Brazilian ambassadors, hosting events organised by the Polish–Brazilian Society and participating in pupils’ exchanges with Brazil. There has been also the interest from Brazil regarding Polish achievements in junior education. For example, in May 2017 almost 50 directors from Brazilian private schools arrived in Warsaw for a study visit focusing on the high results of Polish pupils in PISA tests managed by the OECD.<sup>61</sup>

### 3.4 Tourism

Tourists from Brazil are among the most numerous Latin American visitants to Poland. They usually come to Poland as part of multi-country tours in Europe. Also, there are Brazilians, who come to Poland to find their ancestors’ homeland. As per World Tourism Organisation data, in 2017, 24,000 arrivals of Brazilians to Poland were registered, compared to more than half of that in 2012 and again in 2013. In 2017 it only made 0.04 per cent of inbound tourism to Poland.<sup>62</sup> In 2018, the number stayed at 23,000, which accounted for 0.03 per cent of tourist visits to Poland.<sup>63</sup> These numbers may explain why Polish official statistics not always include Brazil compared to countries with the highest rate of arrivals to Poland. As per data from the Polish Central Statistical Office, there were 11,400 tourists from Brazil registered in Poland. In 2017 it was 5,800 Brazilian tourists (compared to 7,300 in 2016).<sup>64</sup> According to the Brazilian tourism data in 2005, 19,535 Polish tourists arrived in Brazil, while in 2018 it was 21,677. Numbers fluctuated between these years with 2015 at the highest (24,363).<sup>65</sup> One of the problems which may be behind these numbers is the travel cost, but also lack of a direct flight between Poland and Brazil.

<sup>61</sup> Leoni, *Relatório*, 8.

<sup>62</sup> World Tourism Organization, *Poland: Country-specific: Arrivals of non-resident visitors at national borders, by nationality 2012–2017* (Madrid: Yearbook of Tourism Statistics Dataset, 2018).

<sup>63</sup> World Tourism Organization, *Poland: Country-specific: Arrivals of non-resident visitors at national borders, by nationality 2014–2018* (Madrid: Yearbook of Tourism Statistics Dataset, 2019).

<sup>64</sup> Central Statistical Office, ‘Tourism’, 2018.

<sup>65</sup> Extrator de Chegadas de Turistas Internacionais ao Brasil, 2018.

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Barbora Janubová

## Chapter 4

### Slovakia and Brazil

#### 4.1 Political and diplomatic cooperation

As Slovakia shares a common history with Czechia, the following part presents only a brief history of Czechoslovak–Brazil relations,<sup>1</sup> and then we shall focus on Slovak–Brazilian relations since 1993, that is since the year of the establishment of the Slovak Republic.

Slovakia, as part of Czechoslovakia at that time, established diplomatic relations with Brazil in 1920. The first Czech–Slovak ambassador, Jan Klecanda, presented his letter of credentials on 29 June 1920 and Carlos Lemgruber Kropf as Brazilian ambassador in November 1921.<sup>2</sup> After the interruption of diplomatic relations in 1939 because of the occupation of Czechoslovakia during WWII, Brazil recognised the Czechoslovak Government in exile in London on 16 September 1942. As a result of further development and the bipolar organisation of the world, the relations between both countries were limited but never interrupted. Bilateral agreements signed in the 1980s created the basis of the relations between Brazil and a new independent state – the Slovak Republic.

Brazil and Slovakia established diplomatic relations on 1 January 1993 and the first Slovak representative was the Chargé D’Affaires Jozef Adamec. Until now, Slovakia has sent to Brazil the following delegates as the head of the representative office (see Table 1).

<sup>1</sup> For more information see the chapter on the Czech Republic and Brazil.

<sup>2</sup> J Klíma, *Dějiny Brazílie* (Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2011), 385.

*Table 1: List of titulaires of the Slovak Republic in Brazil*

<b>Titular</b>	<b>In office</b>
Chargé D’Affaires Jozef Adamec	1993–1994
Ambassador Branislav Hitka	1994–1998
Ambassador Jozef Adamec	1998–2003
Chargé D’Affaires Terézia Šajgalíková	2003–2005
Ambassador Marián Masarik	2005–2008
Ambassador Branislav Hitka	2008–2012
Ambassador Milan Cigaň	2012–2018
Ambassador Milan Zachar	2018–present

*Source:* Compiled by the author based on the data of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

In addition to the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Brasilia, Slovakia has five representations in Brazil. They include the Honorary Consulate General and Consular Offices mentioned in Table 2.

*Table 2: List of missions of the Slovak Republic in Brazil in 2020*

<b>Representative office</b>	<b>Embassy/consular area</b>	<b>Ambassador/Consul</b>
Embassy of the Slovak Republic	Brasilia	Milan Zachar
Slovak Honorary Consulate General	São Paulo	Peter Paulíček (till 2016)
Consular Office in Belo Horizonte	Minas Gerais	Renato Werner Victor de Queiroz
Consular Office in Recife	Pernambuco	João Alixandre Neto
Consular Office in Rio de Janeiro	Rio de Janeiro	Mohamad Faiçal Mohamad Said Hammoud
Consular Office in Joinville	Santa Catarina	Ernesto Heinzelmann

*Source:* Compiled by the author based on the data of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

The Federative Republic of Brazil has only one diplomatic mission in Slovakia – the Embassy of the Federative Republic of Brazil in Bratislava. The Brazilian Embassy in Bratislava supports Slovak citizens and it provides consular services related to Brazil. The current ambassador of Brazil is Luís Antonio Balduíno Carneiro, who has served as ambassador since 2016, when he replaced Ambassador Susan Kleebank in this office. Both Embassies, Slovak and Brazilian, help to develop mutual relations between the two countries and support cooperation in the political, economic, cultural and scientific spheres.

In recent years, the bilateral cooperation between Brazil and Slovakia has accelerated. In modern history, the milestone of the Slovak–Brazilian relations is the year 2015, when the Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Miroslav Lajčák came to Brazil for an official visit. During his visit, he negotiated with Michel Temer, the Vice President at that time, the previous Minister of External Relations Mauro Luiz Lecker Vieira, Brazilian members of Parliament<sup>3</sup> and the Brazilian ex-Minister of External Relations Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, whom Lajčák invited to the Globsec Conference in Bratislava. M. Lajčák also had a meeting with the consuls serving in Brazil and gave a lecture at the Diplomatic Academy in Rio Branco.

In addition, Ambassador Kleerbank and State Secretary of MFEA Igor Slobodník expressed the need for more frequent visits and contacts between both countries. Subsequently, the cooperation has been deepened, mostly in the economic sphere.<sup>4</sup>

Slovakia also supports the tight cooperation of Brazil with the Visegrád group, of which Slovakia is an active participant. Last year, the Slovak Ambassador Milan Zachar organised a breakfast meeting for the Czech Ambassador Sandra Lang Linkensederová, the Hungarian Ambassador Zoltán Szentgyörgyi, the Polish Chargé D’Affaires Marta Olkowska and Brazilian Designated Minister of External Relations Ernesto Henrique Fraga Araújo. They consulted about the future direction of Brazilian foreign policy and the cooperation with the Visegrád group.<sup>5</sup> All parties confirmed that sound relations should be maintained and deepened. In addition, during the V4–Brazil meeting in Budapest which

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘M. Lajčák v Brazílii: Znovuoživenie kontaktov i konkrétné nové investície’, March 26, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> More information in the section on Slovak–Brazilian Economic Relations.

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Pracovné raňajky s ministrom zahraničných vecí Brazílie’, December 18, 2018.

took place on 15–17 November 2017, ‘the head of the Brazilian delegation said Brazil held the strong cohesion between the countries of the Visegrád Group’.<sup>6</sup>

In general, the Visegrád Group has become a closer partner to Brazil following EU policy. Countries belonging to the Visegrád Group try to diversify their traditional European and North American partners and begin to focus on other markets such as Latin America. Because Brazil belongs to the top partners of the European Union (the EU), the countries grouped in the Visegrád Group decided to enhance cooperation with one of the steady partners of the EU in general. Though the Visegrád countries should be more involved in already-existing programs of the EU to strengthen cohesion with Brazil, countries of the Visegrád Group continue in tighter cooperation within the Group and at bilateral level, too. Actually, most of summits and meetings between Brazil and countries grouped in the Visegrád Group are established at bilateral level. During these meetings, countries are slowly reassessing cooperation and seeking new fields appropriate for common aims.

In 2019, negotiations between Slovakia and Brazil continue. Ambassador M. Zachar has met Eduardo Nantes Bolsonaro, the Brazilian federal deputy and the Chair of the Committee for International Relations and National Defence. During their meeting, Zachar presented an agenda and priorities of Slovakia that would be the main goals of the Slovak Presidency of the Visegrád Group. He also mentioned the previous successes and activities within Brazil–Visegrád cooperation. Bolsonaro approved with satisfaction the cooperation and noticed the current challenges as the security, migration and modernisation of the economy, smart solutions and the need for searching new cooperation possibilities in trade and investments. Bolsonaro supports a continuous dialogue between the Visegrád countries and Brazil.<sup>7</sup> Brazil considers the Visegrád countries steady partners within the EU. Moreover, Slovakia and Brazil also share the idea of reformation of the system of the United Nations.

Recently, Slovakia became an associated member of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP – *Comunidade dos Países de*

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, ‘V4–Brazil meeting in Budapest’, November 21, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Pracovné stretnutie veľvyslancu M. Zachara s predsedom Výboru zahraničných vzťahov a národnej obrany Snemovne poslancov Brazílie’, June 14, 2019.

*Língua Portuguesa)* in 2016.<sup>8</sup> Operating since 1996, CPLP brings together 9 countries – Angola, Brazil, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Portugal, Equatorial Guinea, East Timor, São Tomé and Príncipe.<sup>9</sup> The main goal of the organisation is to foster relations and partnership among Portuguese-speaking countries but also to support close cooperation with other countries in the world. Due to her associate membership, Slovakia may facilitate communication and improve the efficiency of possibilities to cooperate with CPLP countries. Eventually, the actions of the last years prove that the connection between Brazil and Slovakia has become closer and more specific in the political arena.

## 4.2 Economic relations

### 4.2.1 Trade

Brazil is the most important trade partner of Slovakia in the region of Latin America. However, neither Brazil nor Slovakia are among their top trade partners, mutually. Concretely, Slovakia ranks as the 90<sup>th</sup> trading partner of Brazil in the world;<sup>10</sup> meanwhile Brazil is the 26<sup>th</sup> exporter to Slovakia.<sup>11</sup>

The beginning of economic relations between Slovakia and Brazil dates to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Slovakia part of, Czechoslovakia at that time, concluded the first commercial and payment agreement with Brazil in 1931.<sup>12</sup> Despite different political regimes and directions, economic cooperation remained constant and the acceleration of relations started at the end of the 1980s and has continued since.

Until the early 1990s, Slovak–Brazilian trade remained at a level below 40 million USD, the trade value increased to almost 114 million USD in 1997. Thereafter, turnaround decreased at minimum level and increased gradually in the next years. Economic relations did not pick up even after Slovakia had become a member state of the EU; this was probably caused by the lack of overall economic ties between the EU and Latin America. But exports from Slovakia

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘SR je asociovaným pozorovateľom Spoločenstva portugalsky hovoriacich krajín’, November 2, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> CPLP, Estados Membros, s. a.

<sup>10</sup> UN Comtrade Database, s. a.

<sup>11</sup> The Slovak Spectator, ‘Brazil and Slovakia seek ways to grow together’, January 23, 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Klíma, *Dějiny Brazílie*, 386.

to the Latin American region have actually increased by an average of six times in the last thirteen years.<sup>13</sup>

The pre-crisis period is considered an important milestone in trade relations between both countries. Although the global crisis disrupted bilateral trade, the negative consequences did not last for a long time. Brazilian–Slovak turnaround already accelerated in 2010, and it reached a peak in 2014 with a value above 460 million USD. There was a sharp trade deficit on Slovakia's side of -318 million USD. After this year, trade relations have developed well and steadily (see Figure 1).

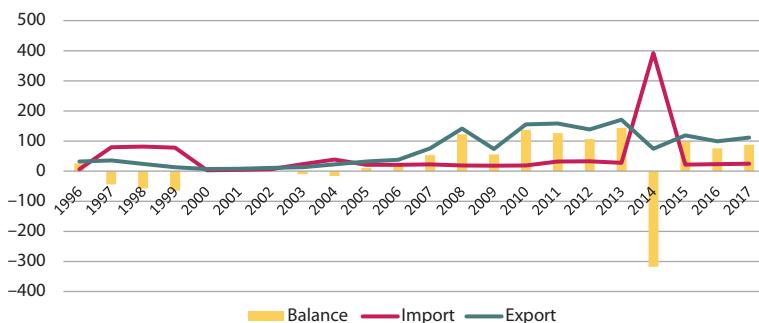


Figure 1: Slovak trade value with Brazil (in million USD)

Source: Compiled by the author based on UN Comtrade Database, s. a.

In 2014, there was a change in the pattern and quantity of Brazilian exports to Slovakia. The most significant components became cuts and edible offal of chicken, parts of pumps, compressors, and parts of devices in general, whose substantial increase in value translated in growth in Brazilian total export to Slovakia which amounted to approximately 102 million USD. The total export of Brazil was stabilised at a significantly lower level (87 million USD) than the previous year. This trend is continuing today.

Changes occurred not only in case of Brazilian exports, there were also changes in Slovak exports in the last years, when the biggest export items

<sup>13</sup> K Brudzińska, 'Getting closer: the V4 and LAC', *Visegrad Insight*, August 18, 2014.

constituted vehicles and their parts. The automotive industry should be a great opportunity for future economic cooperation between Brazil and Slovakia.

Now, the top exports of Slovakia to Brazil are machinery, mechanical appliances and electrical equipment (37 per cent), followed by vehicles, aircraft, vessels, transport equipment (29 per cent) and base metals (15 per cent). Besides these top three commodity categories, to the more significant Slovak exports belong chemical products (6 per cent), plastics, rubber (5 per cent), optical, photographic, cinematographic equipment, clocks and watches (5 per cent).<sup>14</sup> Although Brazil does not belong to the top Slovak trade partners, Brazil purchases more Slovak products than countries like Portugal, Finland and Norway in Europe, as well as Canada.<sup>15</sup>

Distance, poorly known markets and some strict terms on the Brazilian market could be a reason for low export from Slovakia. Customs procedures in Brazilian ports are very lengthy. The time needed to clear goods in the port may reach 10 days or more.<sup>16</sup> Products could be better sold in Brazil after cooperation with a local representative because Brazilian entrepreneurship, mainly state-owned enterprises, require communicating with a foreign company via a delegate. To negotiate in Portuguese is an advantage or if a foreign entrepreneur tries to do business with a small Brazilian company, it is a necessity. Many duties on goods and services are imposed on the Brazilian market. The next significant factor contributing towards success on the Brazilian market is to attend and participate in fairs, exhibitions and long-term promotion of goods and companies.

Like the export of Slovakia, the export of Brazil to Slovakia is dominated by machinery and mechanical appliances and electrical equipment (30 per cent). In the second place were Brazilian exports of base metals, which posted 23 per cent of total Brazilian export in Slovakia. Close behind were live animals and animal products (14 per cent), then Brazilian chemicals (10 per cent), vegetable products (9 per cent), vehicles (5 per cent), foodstuffs, beverages, spirits, vinegar, tobacco, optical instruments, articles of stone, plaster, cement, asbestos, raw hides, skins, leather and furskins that posted below 5% of total Slovak import from Brazil in 2017.<sup>17</sup> Brazil is also interested in delivering natural gas material,

<sup>14</sup> UN Comtrade Database, s. a.

<sup>15</sup> The Slovak Spectator, 'Brazil and Slovakia seek ways to grow together', January 23, 2012.

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, 'Ekonomická informácia o teritóriu', 2017.

<sup>17</sup> UN Comtrade Database, s. a.

fasteners, fertilizers, pharmaceuticals, parts and accessories for passenger cars.<sup>18</sup> According to the Brazilian–Slovak Chamber of Commerce, 340 Brazilian companies have exported their goods to Slovakia.<sup>19</sup>

#### *4.2.2. Foreign direct investments*

Slovakia has successfully attracted several investments from Brazil. The biggest and the most significant from among them is Embraco, the company focused on innovative solutions for refrigeration, namely compressors and air conditioning units. Embraco, founded in 1971 in Brazil, started its business in Slovakia on 5 December 1999. Embraco operates in Spišská Nová Ves, located in the east of Slovakia, where high unemployment is concentrated traditionally. Embraco is one of the biggest foreign investments in this region and plays an important role on the labour market in the east of Slovakia. Embraco is currently the biggest employer in the region of Dolný Spiš in Slovakia; furthermore, it also helps to decrease inequality between marginalised groups and the rest of the population because it employs 10 per cent of Roma in the east of Slovakia.<sup>20</sup> Besides economic benefits, Embraco provides many others, such as the development of the labour environment, as demonstrated by the award Via Bona Slovakia that it won for being the most responsible large company in 2013. The compressor NEU, product of Embraco produced in Slovakia, also won the second prize in the contest Innovative Act of the Year.

Slovakia can be an attractive location for Brazilian investments because of its location in the heart of East Central Europe underlined Ľubomíra Gabrielová, the Head of the Marketing Department at SARIO, and Renato Pellegrini, the General Secretary of the Luso Brazilian Business Association. Slovakia as a member of the EU could be a gateway to the EU common market. Moreover, Slovakia offers a qualified workforce.

Thanks to the presence of Embraco, three other companies from Brazil came to Slovakia. All of them are situated in Spišská Nová Ves, in the east of Slovakia. These investments are CRW Plásticos Slovakia, a producer of injection moulds

<sup>18</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Ekonomická informácia o teritóriu’, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> ‘Brazilian Slovak Chamber of Commerce’, 2017.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Zlaté plakety ministra M. Lajčáka pre veľvyslancov Indonézie a Brazílie’, January 27, 2017.

for the plastics industry, Micro Juntas SK, which manufactures insulators and seals for compressors, and Rudolph Usinados SK, a metalworking and machine tool producer.<sup>21</sup> There are also two food industry companies from Brazil.

Slovak FDI amounted to 12 million USD in Brazil in 2016, amounting to only 3 million USD in 2015.

In terms of investments in Brazil, there are two Slovak investments. The first of them, ESET spol. s.r. o., a company established in 1992, is operating today in more than 200 countries worldwide,<sup>22</sup> including Brazil. ESET spol. s.r. o. has one of its offices in São Paulo and offers computer virus protection services on the Brazilian market.

The other Slovak company connected with the Brazilian market is Sygic, which produces vehicle navigation systems. Sygic has cooperated with Brazilian Multilaser since 2008 of which task is to produce and distribute electronics. Multilaser integrates Sygic navigation into cars and vehicles in Brazil and into personal navigation devices in China, as said by Marian Mladý, the Commercial Manager of Sygic. More than 12 thousand police cars in São Paulo have a navigation system from Sygic. Brazil is also the biggest market for software of personal navigation. Mladý expects the expansion of Sygic products for smartphones in Brazil, which belongs to the top five countries by smartphone users in the world. That is an interesting opportunity and challenge for the Slovak company and an example of cooperation for both countries as well.<sup>23</sup>

These two Slovak high-tech enterprises, ESET and Sygic, have established themselves on the Brazilian market and are an example of successful mutual economic cooperation between both countries, as the official statement of Slovakia also expresses. Therefore science, development and innovation could be spheres with the biggest potential for the future development of bilateral economic cooperation.

Over the past years, the bilateral relations between Brazil and Slovakia have accelerated, as demonstrated by the mutual negotiations and visits of politicians and officials. The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (MFEA) cooperates with other organisations, both Slovak and Brazilian, to strengthen economic cooperation. MFEA supports Slovak entrepreneurs to invest and start business in Brazil by organising fairs.

<sup>21</sup> The Slovak Spectator, 'Brazil and Slovakia seek ways to grow together', January 23, 2012.

<sup>22</sup> ESET, 'Profil a história spoločnosti', s. a.

<sup>23</sup> Finweb, 'Najväčší partner Sygicu je v Brazílii', May 22, 2013.

More specifically, MFEA has invited Slovak entrepreneurs for example to ExpoLondrina in Londrina, Mercopar in Caxias do Sul and Conference TCS in Foz de Iguazu.<sup>24</sup> The other significant event for Brazilian–Slovak relations was the establishment of the Slovakia Business Forum in São Paulo in 2018.<sup>25</sup> During official visits, the Slovak–Brazilian Chamber of Commerce in São Paulo was opened by the State Secretary of the MFEA Lukáš Parízek. MFEA also organised a seminar together with the Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which was attended by the business consultant of the Brazilian Embassy A. Rodrigues Martins.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the Brazilian–Slovak Chamber of Commerce was founded on 6 October 2017, as the first Latin American country's institution of this kind in Slovakia. The chamber was launched with the support of 16 companies and the Embassy of Brazil in Slovakia.<sup>27</sup> SARIO (Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency) is the next institution that supports mutual economic relations, helping projects of Brazilian investors.

Slovakia, as a member of the EU, supported economic cooperation between Mercosur and the EU reached in June 2019. During the Presidency of the Council of the EU, Slovakia confirmed her interest in the renewal of negotiations between the EU and Mercosur. Moreover, the agreement in trade between them could be an opportunity for both Slovakia and Brazil to seek ways how to cooperate more tightly.

### **4.3 Cultural, educational and scientific cooperation**

#### *4.3.1 Migration and famous Slovak–Brazilians*

Currently, migration between Brazil and Slovakia is not significant. Indeed, 259 Brazilians migrated to Slovakia and 131 Slovaks to Brazil in 2017. In comparison

<sup>24</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Medzinárodný obchodný veľtrh o tepelných konverzných riešeniac v Brazílii 01.-03. 06. 2016’, February 18, 2016; Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Veľtrh spojený s výstavou zameraný na pôdohospodárstvo, 7.–17. apríla 2016 v štáte Paraná, Brazílii – ExpoLondrina’ February 29, 2016; Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Pozvánka na veľtrh Mercopar v Brazílii’, October 6, 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Slovensko a Brazília chcú posunúť ekonomickú spoluprácu k vyššej pridannej hodnote’, October 2, 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Podujatie SOPK: okrúhly stôl – Brazília’, November 3, 2015.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Brazilian Slovak Chamber of Commerce’, 2017.

with the other countries of the Visegrád Group, the trend is not to migrate to Brazil a lot. Although migration between those two countries has never been high due to distance, Slovak natives left traces from their original culture during the exodus from Czechoslovakia to Brazil in the previous century. One of them, Zlatica Medlenova de Farias, who has lived in Brazil since 1966, made a documentary about her first interaction with Brazilian culture and environment. She also wrote the book *Literatura e imigração: sonhos em movimento* [Literature and Immigration: Dreams in Motion] in English, in 2006.<sup>28</sup>

It is interesting that one former president of Brazil, Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira, also had Czechoslovak ancestors. As it is mentioned above,<sup>29</sup> the great-grandfather of Kubitschek was Czech, and in addition, the mother of Juscelino was half Slovak and half Czech. The president who ruled Brazil between 1956 and 1961 built the new capital Brasilia.

Probably, the most famous Slovak in Brazil is Milan Rastislav Štefánik, an astronomer, photographer, and military pilot, a Brigadier General in the French Armed Forces, a diplomat and a politician. He is undoubtedly one of the most significant persons in Slovak history due to his participation in the Czech–Slovak foreign resistance during WWI and as one of the founders of the first Czechoslovak Republic. Milan Rastislav Štefánik came to Brazil to do research work as an astronomer. Actually, he observed the total eclipse of the sun on the mountain Passa Quatro, in the federal state of Minas Gerais, in 1912.<sup>30</sup> Later on, the Brazilians built a monument to honour him.<sup>31</sup>

Another significant political leader connected with Brazil is Rudolf Schuster, the former president of Slovakia in the years 1999–2004. He has a significant connection with Brazil because his family, namely his uncle and father, visited Brazil in the 1920s. Moreover, his uncle, Ján Benedik made many pictures and a documentary film about the Pareci Indians, who were indigenous people from Amazonia and worked on rubber plantations.<sup>32</sup> They had also brought many souvenirs and Indian artefacts from their expedition and these were a part of the exhibition in Bratislava Castle and the Slovak Technical Museum in Košice in 2017. The exhibitions also consisted of photos from the expeditions of the former

<sup>28</sup> Leituras dos Girassóis, ‘Zlatica de Farias, da Tchecoslováquia para o Brasil’, 2018.

<sup>29</sup> More information in the chapter on the Czech Republic and Brazil.

<sup>30</sup> Klíma, *Dějiny Brazílie*.

<sup>31</sup> The Slovak Spectator, ‘Little pieces of Slovakia in Brazil’, January 23, 2012.

<sup>32</sup> Pravda, ‘Divoká Brazília na Bratislavskom hrade’, October 28, 2016.

Slovak president Rudolf Schuster who visited Brazil several times, privately and also as head of Slovakia in the years 1991, 2001 and 2014. The last expedition named Brazil – the expedition IV – 2014 was the expedition of the 4<sup>th</sup> generation of Schuster's family.<sup>33</sup> These photos and artefacts were also exhibited in the Slovak Institute in Berlin, during the exhibition of Rudolf Schuster's travels and expeditions named *Churchill's Bears*.<sup>34</sup>

Former President Schuster himself said that 'Brazil had become the second closest country after Slovakia worldwide for his family'.<sup>35</sup> The fact that the Square of Slovakia was opened in the capital of Palmas in Brazil in 2001 is testimony to the significance of the above mentioned. The initial idea was to name this square after Schuster's family but Rudolf Schuster declined it.

#### 4.3.2 Cultural dimension

The Embassy of Brazil has organised the Cultural festival called Brazilslava every year since 2017. The first festival Brazilslava took place on 7 September 2017, on the Independence Day of Brazil (*Dia da Independência*, in Portuguese). The festival shows different forms of Brazilian art through music, dance and theatre performances, cinema shows, architecture, design and literature, representing Brazilian artists. Moreover, some of these shows are presented by Slovak artistic groups, handling Brazilian culture and art. The festival provides an opportunity to connect artists from both countries and gives an overall view of the Brazilian lifestyle, the exotic culture, impressions and tastes of Brazil in the wider sense. Brazilslava is supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, the Federal Government of Brazil, the capital Bratislava, the Portuguese Institute in Slovakia, but also by the British Council in Slovakia, the French Institute in Slovakia etc.

In the first year of Brazilslava, Bratislava offered 14 events at several historical and cultural places and hosted the artists such as the pianist Pablo Rossi, the singer Lica Cecato Stefano Scutari, the architect Professor Daniele Pisani etc.

<sup>33</sup> R Némethová, 'Rudolf Schuster: Brazílska džungľa ma lákala od detstva', *SME*, October 23, 2016.

<sup>34</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, 'Výstava fotografií bývalého prezidenta SR a cestovateľa Rudolfa Schustera v Berlíne', August 27, 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Pravda, 'Divoká Brazília na Bratislavskom hrade'.

The Slovak cinema Lumière in cooperation with the Portuguese Institute in Bratislava showed three Brazilian movies, *Two Sons of Francisco*, *Russian Red* and *The Second Mother*, which brought the problems and aspects of life in Brazil closer to Slovak citizens. In addition, 12 Brazilian painters participated in the Biennale of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) from 8 September until October and the visual contemporary artist Carmela Gross exhibited a light installation in the House of Arts (Kunsthalle) in Bratislava. During Brazilslava, the Slovak capoeira group, the Abadá Capoeira, showed the traditional Brazilian martial art and the Slovak music group Campana Batucada the Brazilian drumbeat.

Thanks to the success of the first year, Brazilslava was organised again the next year and this tradition will continue every year showing closer cultural connection between both countries and interest for Brazilian culture from the Slovak side. During the second year of this festival, a series of Brazilian movies were broadcasted and five movies were screened at the Lumière cinema (the feature films *Elis, A Movie of my Life*, *Gabriel and the Mountain*, *Dear Ambassador, Doctor of Spirits*).

Artists such as pianist Loraine Balen, the musical group Ricardo Fiúza Trio and Brazilian pianist Pablo Rossi performed at the festival. Moreover, the common performance of Pablo Rossi and Slovak violinist Dalibor Karvay was organised to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Brazil and Slovakia. Next, Bratislava hosted the exhibition Circuito Internacional de Arte Brasileira and the exhibition of Slovak traveller and publicist Zdenko Somorovsky and his photographs from Brazil. Within the second year of the festival, Slovak citizens had an opportunity to taste Brazilian barbecue called *churrasco*. In conclusion, a discussion about a book of the well-known Brazilian writer Machado de Assis, the representative of Brazilian realism, was organised.

On the other hand, there is another interesting connection between Brazil and Slovakia. Brazil has a folklore group called Život ('Life', in Slovak) which spreads Slovak culture in Brazil by singing Slovak folklore songs and wearing traditional Slovak folk costumes. The ensemble was established by Slovak immigrants who had brought CDs and DVDs, which inspired the folk group Život to dance and sing Slovak traditional dances and songs, even though its members do not understand the lyrics of the songs.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the Association of Czech and

<sup>36</sup> The Slovak Spectator, 'Little pieces of Slovakia in Brazil', January 23, 2012.

Slovak people was established in Rio de Janeiro in 2017 as an important cultural organisation.

Furthermore, Slovakia as a member of the EU also participates in the European Week in Brazil, where it presents its culture through bazaars displayed in the capital of Brazil. Besides offering demonstrations of Slovak crystals, embroidery, special ceramics called Modranská, Slovak blueprints and typical Slovak food and drink, Slovak representatives inform visitors about the country and the touristic and economic possibilities there.<sup>37</sup>

Within the European Week, members of the EU also organised the European Film Festival where EU countries have the opportunity to screen their movies for Brazilian audiences. Slovakia introduced the movie *Tigre v meste*, shot by Juraj Krasnohorský at the Festival in 2017<sup>38</sup> and the Slovak–Czech movie – *Dôverny nepriateľ*, made by Karel Janák at the Festival in 2019.<sup>39</sup> These movies were presented in the capital, Brasília and other ten cities of federal states (Aracaju, Belém, Belo Horizonte, Curitiba, Florianópolis, Goiânia, Manaus, Porto Alegre, Rio de Janeiro a Salvador).

Moreover, Brazilian citizens had a chance to know more about Slovakia, about the Parliament of Slovakia, as well as the culture and history of Slovakia via broadcast on Radio Senado. The broadcast also contained three speeches of the Slovak ambassador in Brazil – Milan Cigáň.<sup>40</sup>

#### *4.3.3 Educational and scientific cooperation*

Educational cooperation between Brazil and Slovakia is based on agreements signed in the 1980s.<sup>41</sup> Since joining the EU, educational and scientific cooperation is regulated by the Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the European Community and the Federative Republic of Brazil.<sup>42</sup> Though Brazil launched the programme *Science without Borders* in 2011,

<sup>37</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘XIII. ročník týždňa Európy v Brazílii’, May 15, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘XIII. ročník týždňa Európy v Brazílii’, May 15, 2017.

<sup>39</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Slovenský film na XV. ročníku Festivalu európskeho filmu v Brazílii’, May 23, 2019.

<sup>40</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Reportáž o Slovensku v Radio Senado Brazília’, July 11, 2017.

<sup>41</sup> More information in the chapter on the Czech Republic and Brazil.

<sup>42</sup> EUR-Lex, 2019.

Slovakia did not join it. The main aim of the programme financed by the Brazilian Government was to strengthen and expand cooperation with American and European scientific institutions, through international mobility of researchers and students. MFEA regularly informs about the options of cooperation in the educational sector but mutual cooperation is considered as not significant, probably due to the geographical distance between Brazil and Slovakia. Not only do Slovak universities lack departments aimed at research of Latin American countries, but also an institution generally dealing with Brazil and Latin America is missing in Slovakia.

Students have the opportunity to study in Brazil via the programme Erasmus+ and bilateral agreements. The main institution which helps Slovak students and researchers to find possibilities to obtain scholarships to study and doing research abroad, and of course in Brazil too, is SAIA (Slovak Academic Information Agency). Another opportunity for international cooperation is offered by bilateral agreements between several Slovak and Brazilian universities, such as the agreement between the University of Economics in Bratislava (Slovakia) and two partner universities from Brazil: Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo and Universidade de São Paulo. Since 2013, SAIA has provided scholarships and travel grants to four Slovak students to study in Brazil.

On the other hand, six university teachers, researchers and students have gained scholarships from SAIA to study and do research in Slovakia. Though Brazilian students are not very interested in studying in Slovakia, some of them had an opportunity to find out more about Slovakia during a lecture given by Milan Cigán, the Ambassador of Slovakia in Brazil. The lecture was given at the Catholic University in the capital, in 2017. The presentation of the Slovak Ambassador concerned experiences within the EU, the Slovak Presidency of the EU Council, cooperation within the Visegrád Group, the economic situation in Slovakia and the need to strengthen cooperation with Brazil and Latin America.<sup>43</sup>

#### 4.4 Tourism

Tourism also belongs to important aspects of cooperation. Relations in this sector are regulated via the Agreement on the partial visa waiver between the

<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, ‘Veľvyslanec Milan Cigán prednášal pre študentov Katolíckej Univerzity v Brazílii’, May 8, 2017.

Government of the Slovak Republic and the Federative Republic of Brazil on the basis of which Slovak citizens are not required to obtain visas for entry into Brazil.<sup>44</sup> Slovak tourists have to fill out and print two copies of the Brazilian foreigner entry and exit card, and their residence in Brazil shall not exceed 90 days on a semi-annual basis.<sup>45</sup> The agreement applies to both parties identically, and thus Brazilian citizens are eligible for entry into Slovakia with a valid passport and without a visa.<sup>46</sup>

Though Brazilian tourists account only for a small proportion of total visitants (0.29 per cent), they belong to the most numerous group of Latin American visitants in Slovakia, after Mexicans. According to the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic, 6,503 Brazilians visited Slovakia in 2018, 5.9 per cent more than in the previous year.<sup>47</sup> Slovakia already informed about the significant annual increase (32 per cent) in the number of Brazilian tourists who visited Slovakia in 2013. The increased interest of tourists from Brazil is explained by a total increase in visits of Slovakia by foreigners.<sup>48</sup> Tourists from Brazil tend to spend approximately 2 nights on average in Slovakia.<sup>49</sup>

The Ministry of Transport and Construction is responsible for seeking options how to make Slovakia a more attractive destination for tourists. In addition, Slovakia as part of the Visegrád Group, signed the Tourism Cooperation Protocol within which a common marketing plan called *Discover Central Europe* was elaborated. The main aim of this strategy is to attract tourists from farther countries, such as Brazil, to central Europe.<sup>50</sup>

On the other hand, Slovak tourists visit Brazil by a higher proportion. However, Brazil does not belong to the top tourist destinations for Slovak people due to the distance between both countries. According to data of the Ministry of Tourism of the Federative Republic of Brazil, 2,554 tourists from Slovakia visited Brazil in 2018, of whom 1,941 Slovaks arrived by airplane, 572 by road,

<sup>44</sup> Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, 'Federative Republic of Brazil', s. a.

<sup>45</sup> Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, 'Brazilia', s. a.

<sup>46</sup> Zbierka Zákonov c. 70/2007, Agreement on the partial visa waiver between the Government of the Slovak Republic and the Federative Republic of Brazil, 2007.

<sup>47</sup> Ministry of Transport and Construction, 'Štatistiky a analýzy CR', s. a.

<sup>48</sup> Ministry of Transport and Construction, 'Slovensko navštívilo o desatinu zahraničných turistov viac', December 6, 2013.

<sup>49</sup> Ministry of Transport and Construction, 'Štatistiky a analýzy CR', s. a.

<sup>50</sup> Ministry of Transport and Construction, 'Iniciatíva Discover Central Europe zameraná aj na latin America spolu s V4', February 16, 2017.

36 by sea and 5 by waterway.<sup>51</sup> It is an increase in all categories of transport and visits as well.

Most Slovak tourists visited the most famous destinations in Brazil such as São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, followed by Paraná. Only several dozen Slovaks visited the Federal District and the capital, Brasilia built on the initiative of President Kubitschek of Czechoslovak origin. The Amazon forest is not visited frequently by Slovak tourists, in spite of its attractiveness.<sup>52</sup>

In conclusion, there is a curious connection between Brazil and Slovakia, while Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia has a twin in Brazil. Brazilian Bratislava, a small town located in the south of Brazil, was set up by Slovak immigrants some decades ago. Central European influence is felt there to this day owing to the blue eyed people living there. Even Brazilian Bratislava has a football team whose colours are identical to the Slovak national flag.<sup>53</sup> After all, this place could also be an interesting place to visit for Slovak tourists.

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<sup>51</sup> Ministry of Tourism of Brazil, ‘Anuário Estatístico de Turismo’, 2019.

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Maurício da Costa Carvalho Bernardes<sup>1</sup>

## Chapter 5

# Visegrád Countries: A Brazilian Perspective<sup>2</sup>

‘Can we agree that we do not wish to place obstacles in each other’s way,  
or even envy each other, but on the contrary,  
that we want to assist each other?’  
Vaclav Havel

### 5.1 Introduction

One hundred and sixty five years before the arrival of the Portuguese into Brazilian territory, King Charles of Hungary, King John I of Bohemia, his son Charles (later Emperor Charles IV) and King Casimir III of Poland met in Visegrád, on the banks of the Danube’s longest curve, in Hungarian territory, to discuss many topics of common interest. At this unusual meeting, probably the largest Central European summit in the fourteenth century, the leaders of Hungary, Bohemia and Poland discussed for almost a month territorial disputes, military alliances, marriages, trade facilitation and greater cooperation between the three kingdoms.

The Visegrád countries have gone through a thousand years of history between periods of cooperation and conflict, prosperity and difficulties. Milan Kundera well remembers the “essence of the identity” of those countries, firmly based on tradition and on the history of Western Europe and Roman Christianity. They were, however, stigmatized by their European counterparts, as symbols of ‘a mysterious region, with impenetrable languages, unpronounceable names and confusing history’.

During the territorial fragmentation of the Middle Ages, the fight against the Ottoman Empire, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Vienna Congress, the two

<sup>1</sup> Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy and position of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> Translated by Secretary João Henrique Nascimento Dias, FUNAG.

World Wars, the Cold War and the fall of the “Iron Curtain”, the destinies of the Visegrád countries remained intertwined and inextricably linked to the European history. So strong is the connection between these countries that Timothy Garton Ash, when asked if Central Europe indeed exists, chose the Visegrád four as the group that best defines the concept.

On the highest point of the Cold War, in one of the most difficult moments of the history of the Visegrád countries, the spirit of cooperation once again prevailed. Intellectuals and activists, in exile or not, established direct and indirect contacts, sometimes even clandestine conversations, to exchange experiences and ideas about the best way for those countries to return to democracy. After the end of communism, protagonists of the “Charter 77” and of the labour union “Solidarity” became political leaders, congressmen and ambassadors. Those people carried within themselves the positive experience of dialogue among peers of neighbouring countries. Such exchange was a ferment for democratisation.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, all the efforts of the Visegrád countries were concentrated on the full integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures, seen as a way to secure the nascent democracies, to provide economic prosperity and to guarantee their safety.

The meeting between Vaclav Havel, Lech Walesa and József Antall, on 15 February 1991, in the emblematic city of Visegrád, a symbol of union, was a milestone in the effort to reach democracy. The goal was to create a consulting group in order to ensure the total restitution of independence, democracy and freedom; to eliminate the totalitarian system; to build a parliamentary democracy based on the rule of law; to develop a market economy; and to work for the full integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures.

The founding document of the Visegrád Group goes beyond all these and reintroduces the concept of Central Europe, underscoring the common “cultural and spiritual” heritage, the common roots of religious tradition and the fundamental values related to the achievements of European thought. Furthermore, it also highlights the right of each country to express its identity.

With the exception of the period between the years of 1993 and 1996, following the independence of Slovakia, when cooperation was replaced by competition, common efforts and positive results were the paradigm.

In 1991, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia jointly signed an association agreement with the European Community, aiming to open the accession negotiations. In 1994, the Visegrád countries decided to participate in NATO’s “Partnership for Peace”. In 1999, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary

joined the Northern Atlantic Alliance (Slovakia did so, in 2004). All of them became members of the OECD, in the year 2000.

In 2004, after complex negotiations, the Visegrád countries finally achieved their main goal: to join the European Union (EU) and become part of the Schengen area.

New goals were established and new areas of cooperation and dialogue were designated. The declaration of the Prime Ministers from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, on 12 May 2004 – also known as the Kromeriz Declaration – was announced right after the achievement of European Union membership and it set up principles and an action plan that, in general aspects, is still effective when it comes to identifying priorities for cooperation and coordination between the V4 countries, within the European Union and also externally.

The Visegrád countries often envisaged the European Union as a club of partners, given their ethnic, economic and cultural links. However, in face of the hardships of the accession negotiations, they decided to organise themselves and make their needs and priorities heard. The credentials for being actual protagonists in and out of Europe came after the V4 showed greater economic dynamism and active participation in regional security mechanisms and multilateral forums, especially after the 2008 financial crisis, in comparison to other members of the EU who faced more difficulties to overcome it.

“The emerging countries of Europe” felt confident and ready to have a greater voice and presence in the international arena. The political and economic need to diversify partnerships became evident for the Visegrád countries.

Brazilian diplomacy did not remain unaware of this new reality. Being an emerging economy, traditionally drawn to diversifying its partners, to dialogue and to the search of common interests in the multilateral arena, Brazil made sure that cooperation with each of the V4 could grow and become an important element of the European policy of Itamaraty.

Without ignoring the many differences among the V4 countries, this article will focus on the similarities and on the points of political and economic cohesion between these countries. The goal is to present an overview capable of showing the Visegrád countries’ coordinated action in the international sphere. The second part will display aspects of the Brazilian relationship with V4 countries and the potential positive outcomes that can be obtained from cooperating with the group, something that has not yet been well researched by the academia, but is gradually being analysed by the Brazilian diplomacy. The possibilities of cooperation presented in this article certainly are not exhaustive.

## **5.2 Foreign policy priorities of the Visegrád countries**

During the last 30 years, the political dialogue between the Visegrád countries went from an exchange of experiences, aimed at the accession to Euro-Atlantic organisations, to a pragmatic platform of coordination and defence of common interests. There are several coordination mechanisms, many of them still unknown by the general public. Together they facilitate the debate on different topics of the cooperation agenda among the V4, foster cooperation within the EU and address regional, global and multilateral political issues.

The foreign policy priority of the Visegrád countries remains and will always be the European Union and their regional surroundings. Although press coverage often tries to highlight divergences between the V4 and their main European partners, they neither are nor consider themselves an opposition voice against the Western countries of the bloc or against the idea of a united and cohesive Europe.

Throughout the last couple of years, V4 countries have been more active when defending their interests in Europe. They see as legitimate the expression of the different opinions within the bloc and they believe that controversy is an intrinsic feature of a Europe based on democracy and on the spirit of union within diversity. Consequently they reject the idea of being considered the periphery or second class partners, and not the “core” of the European Union. Furthermore, they oppose the imposition of a concept of Europe that determines patterns but neglects differences and particularities.

The document that guides the Visegrád countries after their accession to the European Union and NATO is the Kromeriz Declaration of 2004. There they underscore that their presence on those mechanisms is a “significant step towards the reunification of Europe and a milestone on the path to its democratic transformation”. They manifest their determination to contribute to the goals of the European Union and to the successful continuation of the integration process. The document also expresses their profound conviction that more cooperation between the V4 countries enriches the European community of nations and contributes to the construction of a united, democratic and prosperous Europe.

The action plan established in Kromeriz by the Visegrád countries is noteworthy. Fifteen years later, one can still see its influence on the action plans devised by the pro-tempore presidency of the Visegrád Group. Although all the members try to imprint their own views as well as prioritize certain topics on the program, there is a clear convergence between the last presidency programs.

In the context of the European Union, the V4 countries defend the preservation of the institutional balance and the importance of preserving the competences of national parliaments. They reject the idea of a two-speed Europe, something they perceive as a way to diminish the importance of the V4 countries in the European decision making process. They assert their readiness to debate the “Future of Europe”, based on the consensus to strengthen unity and to prevent the fragmentation of the European Union. Poland managed to change the language regarding the multi speed approach to the bloc, mainly defended by Germany, and reassured that there would be unity of purpose within the framework provided by the existing treaties and that the more developed countries would make sure the other members could achieve their level of prosperity. The Visegrád Group, similarly to Bulgaria and Romania, see some kind of discrimination in the discussions about the future of the continent.

The V4 countries coordinate among themselves for the continuity of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and for the inclusion of their priorities in the Multiannual Financial Framework. They also defend the EU’s structural funds as an essential element for the development of their countries and, thus, for their capacity to reach the living standards of Western Europe. The V4 had a fundamental role on the permanence of the structural funds on high levels at the EU program 2014–2020. They also actively debate the future of those policies after 2020, coordinating themselves with Slovenia, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria.

The topic of energy security is particularly important for the V4 and their economic competitiveness, given the fact that they still depend excessively on Russian gas. For that reason, they pushed for the inclusion, in the European energy program, of the financing of the North–South pipeline, which will cross the territories of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Croatia. The V4 also works for the integration of the Trans Adriatic Pipeline with the Visegrád region, something that would allow access to the gas reserves of the Caspian Sea. They defend the integration of the electric transmission system and the implementation of the European single energy market as a key tool to enhance the competitiveness of the bloc. The V4 is definitely against the construction of the North Stream 2 pipeline (duplication of the pipeline that connects the Russian coast at the Baltic Sea to Germany), for they perceive it as a way to weaken the bargaining power of Ukraine in relation to the European Union and Russia. Furthermore, they consider that the pipeline would divide the EU and enhance the dependence on Russian gas. It is important to mention

that around 15 per cent of the Russian gas that reaches Europe goes through Ukraine, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, via the “Brotherhood” pipeline (Urengoy–Pomary–Uzhgorod), which currently works below its capacity.

Another relevant geopolitical subject for the V4 is the full implementation of the “EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy”. They support the strengthening of the Common Security and Defence Policy as a complementary effort to NATO and they also defend the idea that the EU needs its own tools to deal with the military crises in the neighbourhood. The Visegrád countries had an important role in the construction of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), which they consider a historical step towards European cooperation in the area of defence, due to the binding commitments of the initiative.

In 2014 and 2016, respectively, the V4 established and put into operation the Visegrád Battlegroup, which became the nineteenth battlegroup of the EU, besides the Nordic, Balkans, Franco–German and EUROFOR battlegroups, among others. On that occasion, the battlegroup gathered 3,700 men and women in Poland. Over six months, the four countries did joint military exercises, tested their capacities and simulated situations of conflict. In 2019, another drill of the battlegroup took place.

The V4 responds for 13 per cent of NATO troops placed in Kosovo (KFOR) and for 22 per cent of the military missions of the EU. They defend deepening the cooperation between the group and the European Union in areas such as hybrid warfare, cybersecurity and operational cooperation in the Mediterranean, in order to prevent illegal migration.

Regarding NATO, the V4 sponsors more troops in the Baltic countries, the strengthening of the multinational corps East–West in Szczecin and the establishment of a North–East division in Elblag. They support the construction of the antimissile shield in Redzikowo (north of Poland) and the “Readiness Initiative” of NATO (a set of initiatives aimed at dissuasion capacity and defence measures). On different occasions, the V4 countries reaffirmed their commitment to expanding defence expenditure to 2 per cent by 2024 (Poland has already reached this goal). It is also important to mention the coordination among the V4 countries during the preparatory work for the 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw.

The Visegrád Group supports the EU enlargement process and does contribute with aspiring countries, offering their negotiating expertise regarding the membership process. They consider the Southeast and East European countries priority partners, natural candidates to accession and part of their near zone of influence. The V4 believes that the presence of these new countries in the EU

would increase its voice and influence in the European decision-making process. The Visegrád countries annually organise, with the support of the pro tempore presidency of the group, a high level summit in the format of V4 + Western Balkan states and V4 + Eastern Partnership.

In this effort, priority is given to the Western Balkan states (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). The V4 countries actively work to influence the European strategies and policies for the region, and they support, technically and politically, their accession process. Entering the EU is considered a fundamental tool in order to ensure security, stability and prosperity in these countries. Therefore, they encourage the European institutions to keep a proactive stance regarding the institutional modernisation agenda of these countries, so as to narrow the distance to the European standards. They advocate for the allocation of European funds in improving the infrastructure and the connectivity within the bloc and for projects related to the social and economic development of the Balkan countries. They also use resources of the Visegrád International Fund for these goals.

The V4 group equally supports the accession of the Western Balkan states to NATO, given that they consider that security and stability in the region are inseparable from European security. They provide assistance to fight organised crime, drug trafficking and corruption. The Visegrád countries consider coordination with the Balkans a vital element for keeping the migratory movements under control in Europe, since they constitute a passage corridor for migrating groups.

Strengthening the “Eastern Partnership” – a Polish–Swedish initiative aimed at intensifying the political dialogue and the economic integration with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – is a priority for the V4. The partnership is considered a strategic dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy, a key factor for the stability, security and economic progress of Eastern Europe, especially as a counterweight to Russian influence in those countries. Obviously referring to Russia, the V4 defends the need to react strategically to the “challenging geopolitical context of the present”.

The V4 countries defend the position that the funds provided on the multiannual post-2020 budget supporting partnership projects should be maintained. They also argue in favour of real possibilities of accession for those countries and of an ambitious agenda for the Neighbourhood Partnership states in the long term. For instance, the V4 stood behind the signing of the visa free agreement with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, regarding the Schengen area. They also hold that the arrangement should be extended to Armenia

and Azerbaijan, the latter being considered an important actor for the energy security of the Visegrád Group. The free trade area established between the EU and Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia came into force largely because of the decisive role of the group. The V4 lends support to enhancing connectivity between the “Eastern Partnership” and the EU, given the possible synergy with the EU–China platform.

The Visegrád Group strongly defends Ukrainian territorial integrity and the non-recognition of the annexation of Crimea by Russia. Accordingly, they support the ceasefire in the Donbass region, calling on people to avoid actions that could lead to instability, and they sponsor the implementation of the Minsk Accords. Technical assistance regarding administration reform is also provided by the group, by means of the Visegrád Fund (Ukraine is the biggest external receiver of resources from the fund), via bilateral support and through initiatives such as the “V4 Roadshow in Ukraine”, an event that gathers specialists from different areas (public policy, energy, business, among others) willing to qualify Ukrainian public officers.

The Visegrád countries vehemently oppose the package presented by the EU to deal with the migratory flux to the continent. The mandatory quota system did not work as planned, due to continued political resistance: boycotts from the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, as well as inquiries from the latter and Slovakia to the Court of Justice of the European Union against the mandatory reallocation of refugee applicants. The European Commission announced the beginning of infraction procedures against Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, because of their refusal to receive asylum seekers. In opposition to the quotas, the V4 countries defend the protection of borders, an efficient policy for the return of migrants, reforming the Dublin Convention and financial support to the sending countries in order to reduce the flux of immigrants. None of the V4 will be part of the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

When analysing the calendar of activities from the last pro tempore presidencies of the Visegrád Group, one notices the growing number of coordination meetings prior to large multilateral events, such as the United Nations General Assembly and the Conference on Climate Change.

Throughout the last five years, the number of meetings in the format “V4 Plus” (with other countries and regional blocs) has increased. With the goal of strengthening and spreading the V4 brand – as a symbol of economic success and growing political importance –, consolidating a common identify, diffusing

the “Think Visegrád” platform and bolstering their external visibility, the group organised high level diplomatic summits with the “Nordic–Baltic 8”, the Baltic countries, the Eastern Partnership, the Western Balkans, the Benelux, the Pacific Alliance, the African Union, Bulgaria–Romania, Croatia–Slovenia, Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan), Austria, Germany, Brazil, Canada, China, South Korea, Egypt, the United States, France, Israel, Japan, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

The only permanent structure of the Visegrád Group is the International Visegrád Fund (IVF), an organisation created in the year 2000, with its headquarters in Bratislava. It is a tool for the development of cooperation projects. With around € 8 million per year, the fund’s goal is to finance projects involving the V4, and to also sponsor initiatives between them and third countries. It provides 70 per cent of the total cost of projects in the areas of 1) culture, science and education; 2) student exchange programs; 3) tourism promotion; and 4) academic mobility. Citizens, private companies, institutions, local and regional governments, and organisations from civil society, all of them can apply for the fund’s support with scholarships, residence for artists and writers, among other types of assistance. The fund also receives contributions from third countries and it has already sponsored more than five thousand initiatives.

The growing role of Visegrád countries in the European and the international arena has opened doors for its leaders to occupy high posts in international organisations. The election of Polish ex-Prime Minister Donald Tusk for the presidency of the European Council is an evident recognition of the importance of Poland and of the V4 within the European Union. In this context, it is worth mentioning the excellent campaign of Miroslav Lajcak, the Slovak foreign minister, for the UN General Secretary post. As a recognition, he was appointed as the 72<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly president.

### 5.3 Economic aspects of the Visegrád countries

Together, the Visegrád countries constitute the 15<sup>th</sup> economy in the world (according to the purchasing power parity criterion). Its GDP accounts for US\$ 1.933 trillion, right after South Korea and above Saudi Arabia and Spain.<sup>3</sup> Taking

<sup>3</sup> World Bank, *Doing Business 2018*.

the Brexit into account, the V4 is the fourth economy within the EU, behind Germany, France and Italy.

The V4 gathers a market of 64 million consumers, with largely opened economies. Together, they are the world's eighth exporter of goods, services and primary income (behind the Netherlands and above South Korea) and also the eighth importer (once again behind the Dutch, but better than Canada and Italy). As a comparison, while the Brazilian trade of goods, services and primary income amounts to US\$ 539 billion, the V4 amounts to US\$ 1.4 trillion.<sup>4</sup>

The V4 economies have important elements in common. They had to promote severe reforms in order to transform the centralised and planned production structure, inherited from the communist regime, into free market economies. The path chosen was radical liberalisation and integration in global value chains, mainly in the industrial structure of Germany, their main trade and investment partner.

European structural funds had a prominent role in the development process of the V4 economies. Before their accession to the EU, they represented 1 per cent of their GDP; in 2015, this value share reached 4 per cent. The 2014–2020 EU budget is generous, with provisions that reach around 3 per cent of the average V4 GDP. Besides the improvement in infrastructure, urban rehabilitation and industrial reconversion, the structural funds had a relevant impact in minimising the recessive effects of the 2008–2009 financial crisis, due to low credit and fiscal limitations at that moment.

The openness of the V4 economies is remarkable. Adding imports plus exports in relation to the GDP, the openness of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia is, respectively, 102 per cent, 151 per cent, 172 per cent and 189 per cent (while in France, Italy and Brazil this index is, respectively, 62 per cent, 59 per cent and 24 per cent). Certainly, this deliberate policy to integrate the European value chains contributed to the influx of foreign direct investment, mainly multinational companies taking advantage of the V4 lower labour costs, industrial tradition, central location and attractive fiscal packages. It is important to highlight the growing imports of intermediate goods used to export manufactured goods with greater aggregate value (even though the intermediate goods export to other countries is also relevant), notably in the industry of automobiles, processed foods, steel industry and chemicals. This structure creates opportunities, but also

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, *Doing Business 2018*.

vulnerabilities, since there is a need for constant foreign capital and technology in order to generate growth, income and jobs.

The V4 countries are well ranked in the Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum 2018. The document is based on twelve criteria, such as evaluation of local institutions, infrastructure, openness degree and macroeconomic analysis. There is little differentiation between the Visegrád countries. The Czech Republic takes the 29<sup>th</sup> position, followed by Poland (37<sup>th</sup>), Slovakia (41<sup>st</sup>) and Hungary (48<sup>th</sup>). Brazil is ranked 72<sup>nd</sup>.

The V4 countries are also well placed on the World Bank “Doing Business” index, responsible for evaluating regulatory environments in 190 countries. Poland is the best ranked economy in the group (33<sup>rd</sup>), followed by the Czech Republic (35<sup>th</sup>), Slovakia (42<sup>nd</sup>) and Hungary (53<sup>rd</sup>). Brazil is ranked 109<sup>th</sup>.

The good business environment was not, however, capable of producing giant companies with its headquarters in the V4 countries. This fact is compensated by the presence of some of the biggest global multinationals and, additionally, by the integration of small and medium local businesses into the European chains of production. Some analysts attribute this feature to the late entry of the V4 in the market economy, to the small size of their domestic markets (with the exception of Poland) and to the liberalisation of their economies. According to the Global 2000 ranking from Forbes magazine, which lists the biggest 2000 companies in the world, only nine of those have their headquarters in the Visegrád Group: six in Poland, two in Hungary and one in the Czech Republic (Brazil has nineteen).

The economic model of the V4, especially after the accession to the EU, resulted in great dynamism and growth. One could speculate that their economic bases were smaller than that of the EU15 and also that the convergence funds had an important role on their development. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to downplay their achievements and it is important to stress that they currently represent the most dynamic region of the European economy.

While the GDP by purchasing power parity of the EU grew 51 per cent between 2005 and 2017 (excluding the V4), the Visegrád countries grew 90 per cent in the same period. They were responsible for 7.43 per cent of the EU’s GDP in 2005, and today this number has reached 9.16 per cent. With the Brexit, their economic weight in the bloc will grow even more.

Only Slovakia has adopted the euro; the other three countries have kept their own currencies. Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary refuse to give away some monetary policy flexibility in a context of crisis. Many economists attribute their quick recovery from the 2008–2009 financial crisis to the existence of

a national currency. Although communitarian regulations do curb their ability to freely conduct economic policies, the possibility of devaluating the exchange rate kept their exports on high levels, making their economic recovery faster.

Since 2013, unemployment has diminished and, currently, it has reached historical low levels. All Visegrád countries practically show full employment conditions (2.9 per cent in the Czech Republic and below 5 per cent in Poland and Hungary). Wages and productivity have also grown, but they are still under the EU average.

The V4 economies are still in the process of catching up to the main economies within the EU. There are financial stability, positive macroeconomic results and a favourable business environment for investment and consumption. However, despite the inflow of structural funds until 2020, the path to sustainable economic growth is not exempt from medium term challenges.

Even if there is political coordination, the V4 themselves do not expect to sustain the current levels of support from the convergence funds after 2020. They must find new sources to finance their investments, mainly in infrastructure, an area that is still lagging behind when compared to other European partners.

Another challenge for the V4 is attracting investment in innovation and in the sector of creative economy. Gradually, new topics – such as cybersecurity, industry 4.0, e-commerce, e-government, startups and smart cities – are being included in the agenda of the group. New economic topics, too have gradually entered the debates, even though these have been usually placed as secondary issues.

The economic opening process and, consequently, the dependence on the European market – the biggest destination of exports from the V4 – left their economies vulnerable to crises in the EU, as the 2008 financial crisis showed. It is worth mentioning that Poland was the only country in the bloc that kept showing positive numbers between 2008 and 2012. In this context, low European growth limits the performance of the V4. The Visegrád countries need to diversify their economic associations in order to ease the potential damage caused by the weak performance of their traditional partners. The international activism of the group, especially in relation to emerging countries (Brazil included) is seen as a result of this diagnostic.

Greater economic cooperation among the Visegrád countries is still something to be explored. The main coordination efforts are made in the political field and only secondarily in the economic area. A strong competition between themselves can be noticed regarding the attraction of foreign direct investments.

Despite the obstacles, the Visegrád countries are particularly dynamic, open and strong, features that have granted them the epithet “emerging markets of Europe”, drawing much attention from relevant international actors. They found themselves as an economic and political group that deserves to have a louder voice in the European and international arenas. Their foreign policies have been recently directed to reach these goals.

## 5.4 Relations between the Visegrád countries and Brazil

### 5.4.1 Migration

The relations between Brazil and the Visegrád countries are mainly grounded on the interconnections of our people. Even before becoming an independent country, Brazil had already received Jesuit migrants from the V4. Right after Brazilian independence, engineers, artists, geologists, geographers, researches and merchants arrived. In 1831, Jan Nepomuk Kubíček, one of the great grandfathers of Brazil’s future president Juscelino Kubitschek, set up in Diamantina.

The first large migratory wave coming from the Visegrád countries to Brazil took place in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the Empire of Brazil was making efforts to populate the Southern region of the country. The Eusébio de Queirós Law, from 1850, prohibited slave traffic in Brazil, and the promulgation of the land law, also in 1850, gave a normative incentive to the arrival of European migrants. The intense diplomatic connections (Brazilian Emperor Pedro II was the son of Empress Maria Leopoldina, the daughter of Francis I, Emperor of Austria) and the growing economic ties between Brazil and the Austrian Empire (later the Austro-Hungarian Empire) prevented Brazil from being completely unknown in the eyes of the citizens of this European Empire, although it was still an exotic destiny.

After undergoing a strong economic crisis, and with the easing of the migratory policy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in the 1867 Constitution, some of the Empire’s citizens decided to look for new places. Brazil was chosen by many of them.

A new migratory wave took place after the Trianon Treaty, when borders were redefined at the end of the First World War. Poverty and insecurity were brought by the economic crisis and the changed territorial arrangements in Europe.

After the end of the Second World War and the beginning of communist regimes, there was a new outflow of migrants coming from the Visegrád countries to Brazil.

The large majority of migrants coming from the V4 set up in the Southern region of Brazil. In the state of São Paulo, there is an important Hungarian community. In the Brazilian Central region, the Czech migration is strong.

The number of migrants and descendants from the Visegrád countries in Brazil can only be estimated, although it is often exaggerated, due to feelings of belonging related to European ancestors. It is believed that around 3 million have Polish origins; 500 thousand have Czech and Slovak origins; and 100 thousand, Hungarian. Adding them up, these numbers correspond to approximately 5 per cent of the current population of the V4.

The integration of these migrants and their descendants into the Brazilian society, the liberty to both maintain their traditions, identities and promote their culture in Brazil are facts widely recognised and valued by the V4 countries.

#### *5.4.2 Diplomatic relations and high level visits*

With the end of the First World War and the consolidation of Wilson's Doctrine, the Visegrád countries had their Independence re-established and Brazil was active to assure its links with the newly independent countries. Brazil was the first Latin American country to recognise the Polish independence, in 1918. In reality, the recognition came even before, when Brazil supported Poland's independence, while the country was occupied. This same cause was defended by Ruy Barbosa, in 1907, during the Hague Convention of 1907. In 1918, Brazil was also the first country of Latin America to recognise the shared state between Slovaks and Czechs. In 1927, diplomatic relations between Hungary and Brazil were established.

After World War II, during the years of communism, Brazil and the V4 naturally grew apart.

The fall of the Berlin Wall, which coincided with the return of direct presidential elections in Brazil, brought new opportunities for cooperation. Supporting the political process taking place in the V4, and as a sign of rapprochement, Brazilian President, Fernando Collor, visited Prague in 1994.

Brazil was the first country in Latin America to recognise the Independence of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, soon after the Velvet Divorce, in 1993.

In the following year, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, elected President, visited Prague and Budapest, and the Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus visited Brazil. In 1995, Lech Walesa, the President of Poland, visited Rio de Janeiro, Curitiba and Foz do Iguaçu. In 1996, the Czech President, Václav Havel, paid an official visit to Brazil. He went to Rio de Janeiro, Brasília and Manaus.

After the accession of the Visegrád countries to the EU and to NATO, and especially after the 2008–2009 crisis, there was new impetus to Brazil–V4 bilateral relations. Looking to diversify partnerships, showing great economic dynamism, enjoying the role of an emerging voice within the EU and seeking a more prominent role in and out of the block, the Visegrád countries found a natural partner in Brazil.

The last two decades were marked by high level meetings and visits favoured by major events organised by Brazil. In 2006, Czech Prime Minister, Jiri Paroubek, travelled to Brazil. The visit was reciprocated in 2008, by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. In 2009, Czech President, Václav Klaus, visited Brazil. In 2012, it was the Hungarian President, János Áder, who travelled to Brazil on the occasion of the Rio + 20. In the following year, Brazilian Vice President, Michel Temer, paid an official visit to Budapest and, in 2015, to Warsaw. Hungary's President, János Áder, and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, both participated at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. Slovak President, Andrej Kiska, was in Brazil for the same event.

In 2019, Viktor Orbán, Hungary's Prime Minister, joined the inauguration ceremony of President Jair Bolsonaro. An official visit of the Brazilian head of state to Poland and Hungary is expected in the first semester of 2020.

After 2009, despite the evident increase in the number of visits by ministers and high officials, there was no modernisation or enlargement of the legal framework between Brazil and the V4. The Brazilian delay in ratifying the agreements already signed was a limiting factor. The fact that the Visegrád countries delegate the negotiation and competence of many topics of common interest to the European Union, with which Brazil maintains a “strategic partnership”, also reduced the commitment to signing new documents. The multiple and promising areas of relationship between Brazil and the V4 deserve, however, an effort to broaden its legal framework.

Brazil is the only South American country to maintain and host resident embassies in and from all the Visegrád countries.

*Table 1: List of missions of the Federative Republic of Brazil in the Visegrád countries in 2020*

Embassy	Representative office	Ambassador
Embassy of Brazil to Hungary	Budapest	José Luiz Machado e Costa
Embassy of Brazil to the Slovak Republic	Bratislava	Eduardo Gradilone
Embassy of Brazil to the Czech Republic	Prague	Márcio Florêncio Nunes Cambraia
Embassy of Brazil to the Republic of Poland	Warsaw	Hadil da Rocha Vianna

*Source:* Compiled by the author based on the data of the Itamaraty.

#### *5.4.3 Trade and investments*

The economic area is one of the most promising aspects of Brazil's relationship with the V4. Brazil and the Visegrád countries have strong, dynamic economies with great potential for growth. They also have important consumption markets and their main industries are notably complementary, with the exception of the agroindustry.

In 2017,<sup>5</sup> Brazil exported US\$ 866 million to the V4 countries and imported US\$ 1.479 billion, with a deficit on the Brazilian side of US\$ 613 million. If analysed together, the V4 would be the 24<sup>th</sup> Brazilian provider, in front of neighbouring countries such as Colombia and Bolivia and just behind Peru; and the 40<sup>th</sup> destination of Brazilian exports, just ahead of Ecuador. It is noteworthy that foreign trade data with the V4 are affected by the "Rotterdam effect", since a significant part of the trade uses that port and it is often recorded as a transaction with the Netherlands. Eurostat figures show significantly higher trade between Brazil and the V4 countries.

The Brazilian export agenda is mainly comprised of primary products, such as iron, soy, copper and leather. Some industrialised products have significant weight, such as airplanes to Poland (Lot is one of the main European buyers of Embraer aircraft), pumps and compressors for Slovakia, auto parts for Hungary and the Czech Republic. The V4 exports mainly manufactured products to Brazil, with emphasis on auto parts, something that indicates there is integration between the automotive chain and the automakers installed in the V4 and in Brazil.

<sup>5</sup> 'Comex Vis Visualizações de Comércio Exterior', 2018.

The companies with headquarters in the Visegrád countries are mostly small and medium-sized ones. They often focus on their internationalisation process, as one would suspect, prioritising the European Union and its regional environment. The large industry and service companies based in V4 countries are, to a great extent, multinationals seeking tax advantages, excellent local labour at lower costs and closer proximity to consumers in the most dynamic region of the EU. This scenario makes it difficult to attract investments to Brazil from companies based in the V4 countries. Ideally, the V4 companies, if operating in Brazil, could access the local market more easily and use the country as a platform for exporting to South America, perhaps in joint ventures with Brazilian companies.

In the same way, there is a lack of knowledge among Brazilian entrepreneurs regarding the potentialities and advantages offered by the V4 countries when it comes to attracting investments. The internationalisation of Brazilian companies in Europe is still concentrated in countries with which Brazil has had a long trade and cultural history, such as Portugal, Spain, Italy, France and Germany.

The main Brazilian investment in the region, placed in Slovakia since 1999, with several reinvestments later, is Embraco, a company of compressors and assembly of refrigeration systems based in Santa Catarina, and its Brazilian suppliers (CWR, Microjuntas and Rudolph Machined). Embraco generates more than 2,500 jobs in an area where there is a high level of unemployment, which qualifies it as an example of foreign investments in Slovakia. Besides the industrial plant, it has a research and development centre with more than 100 employees, working in the development of commercial compressors and of natural refrigerants such as propane and isobutane, environmentally friendly and more efficient than synthetic fluids. The operation was so successful that Embraco decided to transfer a branch of its operations from Italy to Slovakia. Recently, Embraco was sold to the Japanese company Nidec.

In Poland, the main Brazilian investment is “IT Stefanini”. It started its activities in 2012 in the city of Krakow, and later settled in Warsaw, in the service desk and corporate software management sectors. The company expanded its regional operations, opening an office in Budapest. In the Czech Republic, investments from one side to another are scarce. One of the rare examples is the purchase of the Czech company Sellier & Bellor by the Brazilian Cartridge Company.

The main investor of the V4 in Brazil is Poland. It has made significant direct investments in Brazil in recent years. It is worth noting the acquisition of the company Mettalic do Nordeste, located in the metropolitan region of Fortaleza,

by Can-Pack, a Krakow company of the metallurgical sector, which also built a factory in Itumbiara (Goiás) in 2018, with investments estimated at US\$ 300 million. The Polish company Selena has a polyurethane foam factory in Ponta Grossa, Paraná; Maflow, which sells air conditioning systems, was acquired by the Polish company Boryszew in 2010; eSky owns one of the most important tourist sites in Brazil, “eDestinos.com.br”. Investments were also made by LUG, the manufacturer of lighting products; Komandor, a manufacturer of components for modular wardrobes and sliding systems for doors and drawers; and Medcom, a traction network provider for the São Paulo subway.

An important real estate investment was announced by a Polish investment fund in the municipality of Baía Formosa, Rio Grande do Norte. They will build two resorts and a village of high standard houses, with estimated investments of \$ 400 million.

In December 2016, the Hungarian subsidiary of the Swiss holding company EcoSolifer signed a protocol with Santa Catarina to install a photovoltaic solar panel plant in that state. In 2017, a technology transfer agreement between the Hungarian company Innomed Medical Zrt. and the Brazilian Prolife Medical Equipment Eireli was signed, for the production of defibrillators and for cooperation in the fabrication of digital computed tomography equipment. In 2019, the Czech company Tatra Trucks announced the construction of its first international plant in Ponta Grossa, with investments estimated at US\$ 150 million.

Brazil has established, through bilateral agreements, economic mechanisms with the four V4 countries to identify business opportunities. The Brazil–Hungary Joint Economic Commission was created by the Brazil–Hungary Economic Cooperation Agreement of 2006, in force since 2009, and was recently upgraded to the level of Foreign Ministers. The joint economic–trade cooperation committee between Brazil and the Czech Republic, established in an agreement signed in 2008, met for the first time in Prague in May 2010. The working group on trade and investment promotion, concluded between the Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade and the Slovak Ministry of Economy in 2009 never met. The economic cooperation agreement with Poland dates back to the 1980s. Both countries tried to negotiate an update of the economic agreement, to be signed during Michel Temer’s visit to Poland, in 2015, but they did not succeed.

Brazil, on different occasions, has taken an interest in holding an economic meeting in the V4 + Brazil format. It did not prosper. The Brazilian side considers that a meeting with these characteristics could attract more interest from Brazilian

businessmen and government agencies than if it were carried out individually with each of the countries.

One positive step in this direction was the organisation of a workshop between representatives of trade promotion and investment agencies from Visegrád countries and Latin American countries at the III Hungary – Latin America Forum in November 2017, in Budapest. On the occasion, the agencies activities were displayed. It was followed by business roundtables to identify investment opportunities.

An important factor to boost economic, commercial and business ties, and also increase the integration of productive chains between Brazil and the V4 countries would be the prompt ratification of the Mercosur – European Union free trade agreement and the Brazilian accession to the OECD.

#### *5.4.4 Cooperation in defence*

The area of defence is a particularly promising field for cooperation. Brazil has bilateral agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic. The Brazilian side has already expressed an interest in subscribing to the same document with Hungary and Slovakia.

A cooperation milestone in the area of defence was the visit of the Brazilian Defence Minister, Nelson Jobim, to the Czech Republic and Poland, reciprocating the visit of his Polish counterpart, Bogdan Klich, in 2009. On that visit, he visited the Aero Vodochody, one of the most important aeronautical industries in Central Europe. On 13 April 2011, Embraer and Aero Vodochody signed an agreement to enable the Czech company to participate in the KC-390 military freighter project. The company was in charge of the production of the rear fuselage, doors, the cargo ramp and the slats of the aircraft.

Another emblematic moment was the visit of former Defence Minister Ambassador Celso Amorim to his V4 counterparts in Bratislava in 2013, where multiple possibilities of cooperation were identified. In addition to meetings with each of the countries, it was the first time a ministerial meeting in the V4 + 1 format with Brazil took place.

Brazil has shown interest in cooperation in areas such as cyber defence, cryptography and open code systems, special units and joint training. Participants also identified opportunities for cooperation in defence material, citing the example of Embraer.

The V4 + 1 meeting format (or “V4 plus” as it is also called) was replicated in the defence area on another occasions, during the LAAD Defence & Security fair in Rio de Janeiro in 2015.

The Brazilian Air Force’s choice of Saab’s Gripen NG under the FX-2 Program offers opportunities for cooperation with the Czech Republic and Hungary, since both countries’ air forces use JAS-39 Gripen fighters. The Czech side offered Brazil the possibility of cooperating to train pilots and to use their simulators.

Since 2017, the Brazilian Air Force (FAB) participates in meetings of the “Gripen Users Group”, which has the Czech Republic and Hungary as members. The first Brazilian participation took place in Prague. In 2018, Brazil received the group for the first time. On that occasion, information and operational discussions of maintenance and logistics related to fighter aircraft were shared. The meetings are held every six months and are valuable opportunities for the exchange of experience.

Brazil, the Czech Republic and Poland share the use of the EADS Casa C-295 transport aircraft. This could open a new front for cooperation and exchange of experience.

Particularly encouraging is the possibility of V4 countries acquiring the KC-390 military freighter. Such an acquisition would entail considerable opportunities for cooperation in defence and between the aeronautical industries of all countries, something that already occurs with the Czech Republic, which, as was mentioned above, participates in the aircraft project.

#### *5.4.5 Educational and scientific cooperation*

Brazil has bilateral agreements in the educational, scientific and technological areas with all the Visegrád countries. This is a promising aspect of cooperation with the V4, due to their strong university tradition and the existence of recognised centres of excellence in exact sciences. As a reference, the Visegrád countries have won 32 Nobel Prizes, most of them in areas such as chemistry, physics and medicine. The openness and willingness of all V4 countries to receive Brazilian students must also be underscored.

Brazil and Hungary have signed an agreement that allowed the inclusion of Hungarian universities in the Science without Borders program, which, during its period (2013–2016), attracted more than two thousand Brazilian students to that country. Since 2017, when the program was ceased, the Hungarian Government,

after signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities and the Ministry of Education of Brazil, offers 250 scholarships per year for Brazilians, under the Stipendium Hungaricum program.

The Brazilian Association of State and Municipal University Presidents (ABRUDEM) completed an international mission in Hungary in 2018. The program included technical visits to 14 universities in the country. The Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities – an association that currently comprises 83 presidents of higher education institutions (57 federal, 20 state and 6 community) – held its 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and its 10<sup>th</sup> International Seminar in Budapest in September of 2018.

With the support of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Rio de Janeiro hosted the VI World Science Forum in 2013, the first time that forum was not held in Budapest. The final declaration of the event recognised the decisive Hungarian role for the event to be organised in Brazil.

With Poland, in 2015, 2016 and 2017, editions of the “Polish–Brazilian Conference on Science and Technology” were held, an initiative led by the University of Brasilia (UnB) and the Polish Aviation Institute, focused mainly on the aerospace industry. Within this mechanism, a group of students of Aerospace Engineering of UnB participated on an exchange program at the Aviation Institute of Poland.

Cooperation in the academic and educational areas between Poland and Brazil has taken place mostly within the framework of specific understandings between Universities of both countries, not relying on bilateral legal frameworks or systematic monitoring by governments. The University of São Paulo (USP), for example, has academic agreements in force with eight Polish universities. About 30 Brazilian students were received by Polish universities, under the auspices of the Science without Borders program.

Brazil has also found support from the V4 countries to organise a meeting between principals from Brazilian and V4 Universities, in order to identify areas of common interest and to explore possibilities for academic cooperation.

Another possible source of cooperation, also suggested by the Brazilian side and welcomed by the V4 countries, would be the development of joint research projects, using shared funding from the Visegrád Fund and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq).

#### *5.4.6 Political dialogue*

Brazil has signed bilateral agreements with all V4 countries for regular diplomatic consultations. Itamaraty has held political consultation meetings with each of the countries of the Visegrád Group, normally biannually and at the level of undersecretaries or political directors. The goal is to review the main items on the international agenda, bilateral relations, regional issues, topics of mutual interest in multilateral forums and exchanges of candidacies.

The meetings have been of special interest to the Brazilian side. It is an opportunity to get a better understanding of important regional issues, such as the impact of migrations on the European continent, the “Brexit” impact, the Mercosur–European Union agreement, the future of the European Union, the relations with Russia, among others. Likewise, the Visegrád countries are interested in knowing Brazil’s opinion on Latin American issues, such as the situation of specific countries in the region, the state of regional cooperation mechanisms, and regional political and economic trends.

Political consultations with V4 countries also provide an excellent opportunity to review the current state of the bilateral agenda, identify priorities, clarify difficulties, identify and advance concrete cooperation projects.

The participation of senior officials in events focused on regional topics, promoted by think tanks or governments, is also an area for interesting opportunities. Brazil has participated on the annual Forum Globsec event, held in Bratislava with a main focus on security and global trends; and on the Latin America – Hungary Forum, a space of debate aimed at exploring opportunities for cooperation between Hungary and Latin American countries. It is believed that there is room for Brazilian think tanks to establish contacts with the Think Visegrád platform, which is partly funded by the Visegrád International Fund and brings together the main international relations centres of the V4 countries.

Without detracting from the importance of bilateral political meetings, the holding of consultation talks in the V4 + Brazil format has special political significance. It demonstrates the relevance attributed by the Visegrád countries to the relationship with Brazil, which is included in a select group with consultations in the “V4 plus” format.

The first meeting was held in Brasilia in 2015, shortly after the United Nations General Assembly, with the political directors of the V4 countries and the Brazilian Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, Sérgio Danese. At that time, the V4 delegation was led by the Political Director of the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of the Czech Republic (occupying the presidency of the group), Ivan Jestráb. Among the topics discussed at the meeting were: the Brazilian context, the structure and priorities of the Visegrád Group, the migratory crisis, the Mercosur–European Union agreement, prospects for cooperation between Brazil and V4, Latin America and its integration processes, the situation in the Middle East and European regional issues.

The second meeting took place in Budapest, in 2017, in the context of the Latin America – Hungary Forum. The Brazilian delegation was headed by the Undersecretary General of International Cooperation, Commercial Promotion and Cultural Issues of Itamaraty, Santiago Mourão. The Visegrád Group delegation was led by Szilveszter Bus, Secretary for the “Opening to the South” of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Hungary, occupying the pro-tempore presidency of V4. The consultations, at that time, were divided into four blocks: politics and security; culture, education and science; economics and trade promotion; investment and tourism.

The meetings show that, although there is no unanimity in the treatment of some issues, there is clear coordination among V4 countries on several topics of the international agenda. In addition, there is an open, mature and frank debate in the search for common solutions to sensitive issues for the Visegrád countries. It is an exercise of great interest on the Brazilian side that could be replicated regularly in the future.

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Sándor Gyula Nagy

## Chapter 6

# Complementarities and Opportunities for Cooperation between the V4 Countries and Brazil

The previous chapters have shown that the Visegrád countries and Brazil have accumulated extensive connections over a long-term history of their – mainly bilateral – relations. The V4 countries and Brazil mutually consider each other as a potentially important partner, and are searching for opportunities to strengthen their relationship. Despite extensive traditional ties, wide-ranging political, diplomatic and social connections, and some emerging economic achievements, there is still a lot of room for improvement in the relations between the Visegrád countries and Brazil in several areas.

### **6.1 Political and diplomatic cooperation**

All countries of the Visegrád Group have embassies in Brazil, and all of them have general and/or honorary consulates. Brazil has embassies in all V4 capitals as well. Bilateral diplomatic relations are stable and continuous, and have been quite active in the last years. Considering high level visits and political dialogues, it is clear that neither does Brazil treat the Visegrád Group as an entity, nor do the V4 countries behave like it. However, in the last decade there were some common initiatives and cooperation, mainly in the framework of the Visegrád+ formation, but also in the area of defence policy and related industries.

In the case of the Czech Republic, economic interests have always outweighed political-diplomatic ones. The reason behind that is possibly the lack of conflict of interest between the sophisticated and productive Czech industry and the Brazilian agricultural sector. Brazil's relations to Hungary seem more diplomacy and education-dominated as Hungary is less relevant for Brazil regarding industrial production. Surprisingly Poland (compared to its size) had the least deep relationship with Brazil, which may be due to the competitive agricultural

production. Slovakia chose the strategy to negotiate with Brazil in the framework of V4 countries, which can be explained by the short interval of time after gaining independence in 1993.

Even though bilateral ties with some V4 countries are active, it cannot be stated for the whole group. It has to be underlined that the embassy of the V4 rotating presidency is always coordinating common consultations and organising events to promote the Visegrád Group. In our opinion, in spite of these existing efforts, high level political dialogue should be organised regularly in the framework of Visegrád+ to enhance further political and diplomatic cooperation between the partners.

Furthermore, a coordinated “Brazil Strategy” from all Visegrád countries would be welcome, with concrete project and cooperation proposals like that of the Hungarian Government (see the end of Chapter 2.1).

## **6.2 Economic cooperation**

From Brazil to the European Union trade and investment are intense, which cannot be seen in the statistics for Central Europe (including the Visegrád Group) because of the so-called Rotterdam effect. The goods are not arriving directly to these countries, but through European intermediaries (mostly Dutch and German companies).

In the case of trade and foreign direct investment towards Brazil, the “Custo Brasil” is an existing burden but there are many more and sometimes bigger obstacles for economic cooperation. The geographical and cultural distance, as well as the asymmetry in size, remain factors that will always limit bilateral trade and investment. “Political friendship”, intensive diplomatic activities and a possible (EU–Mercosur) free trade agreement might nevertheless have the potential to overcome some of these limits. Some companies’ success stories (such as Comarch, Synthos, Richter Gedeon, Embraer, Seko Group, Stefanini, Graphisoft and eSky/eDestinos) show that in the IT sector and with regards to knowledge-based, high added-value products (for example pharmaceuticals, chemical industry or machinery) there is room for cooperation for the business partners.

It would be an interesting initiative to organise a Joint Economic Committee with Brazil on the V4 level; its decisions could be supported by the national export promotion agencies of the parties.

### **6.3 Cultural, educational and scientific cooperation**

The two regions have had more than two hundred years of shared history in cultural and educational relations, initially enhanced by individuals from the Jesuit Order and other religious missions, as well as immigrants from Central Europe (the former Habsburg and Russian Empires), rather than through bilateral relations. This has changed after the First World War, where there was a mix of formal influence from the new national states and the hundreds of thousands of immigrants arriving in several waves, mostly during the turbulent years in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Mutual interest was expressed and bilateral ties have been strengthened since the early 2000s, when the Visegrád countries joined NATO and the EU, and Brazil became a rapidly emerging economy. The big boost for educational cooperation kicked in with the Ciência sem Fronteiras program. The influx of Brazilian students to the region followed events such as the creation of BRICS, the world football championship and the Rio Olympics, all of which raised public interest in Central Europe towards Brazil. With the economic problems mounting in Brazil and in the EU, the exchange programs slowed down significantly. If the parties want to create mutual knowledge and respect between the people of the two regions, it has to start from education. In times characterised by a lack of funds, a joint project (possibly financed by the International Visegrád Fund) could be initiated to identify possibilities in primary and secondary education in Brazil and in the Visegrád countries, for increasing the quality and quantity of historic, cultural and scientific matters about the other region in the educational programs. In times of more generous budgetary possibilities, university exchange programs could be enhanced as well.

### **6.4 Cooperation in tourism and sport**

In tourism and sport, there are many potentials to develop. Despite the fact that the Visegrád countries are still an unknown region for most of Brazilians, and Brazil is perceived as a very unfamiliar place for people from the Visegrád countries, there is an opportunity window for cooperation and the creation of joint projects to strengthen ties.

In terms of touristic flows, the level of visitors from the Visegrád Group to Brazil is still very low. The same phenomenon can be observed regarding

most countries of Europe, since Brazilian tourists prefer to visit more popular destinations like France, Germany or Spain instead of exploring Central European countries. The case of Poland seems to be a little bit different, as the latest statistics present an increasing flow of Brazilian tourists in recent years, but these figures still show a big room for improvement. In this context, it is necessary to strengthen efforts to promote Brazilian tourism in the Visegrád countries and vice versa. Aiming to foster tourism from V4 to Brazil and vice versa, joint actions as tourism roadshows or gastronomy events etc. could be organised in big Brazilian cities about the V4 countries and in V4 capitals about Brazil. One negative factor is that there are no direct flights from Brazil to the capital cities of the Visegrád countries. But the biggest challenge is the general lack of knowledge about the Visegrád countries in Brazil and vice versa.

In case of the Czech Republic and Hungary, some efforts have been made in order to spread the knowledge of the Czech and Hungarian languages, mostly among the descendants of émigré families. Both states have launched state-funded programs to send professors and language teachers to Brazil. In the field of sport, Hungary has more extensive connections to Brazil in comparison to the other Visegrád countries, as many Brazilian players live in the country, and play for Hungarian teams. Family ties have a stronger role in the case of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. In Brazil, some prominent figures have Czechoslovak ancestors like the former president Juscelino Kubitschek, whose mother was half Slovak and half Czech.

Sports diplomacy could be an effective tool to strengthen ties between Brazil and the Visegrád countries, including cooperation and exchange programs between the two regions' football clubs. It is important to use mass media to promote Brazil as a tourist destination in the Visegrád countries and vice versa. TV spots and announcements in magazines can be good strategies, as well as organising photo exhibitions of Brazilian natural sites or artefacts from ancient Brazilian cultures. Considering the importance of prominent Brazilian figures in the Visegrád countries (like Eduarda Idalina Amorim in Hungary), and also the outstanding role of Visegrád citizens in Brazil, like János Schiffer (Hungarian volleyball player) or Milan Rastislav Štefánik (Slovak astronomer), it is important to encourage the academic exchanges in order to facilitate the rise of prominent scholars and academic figures to strengthen ties between countries. The promotion of tourism, and cultural and educational cooperation are goals where regional cooperation (Visegrád Group and Brazil) has the ability for providing valid support.

The book aims to strengthen economic, cultural, scientific and human connections between Brazil and the Visegrád countries, and to contribute to the better understanding among them.

The idea to prepare a publication about the Visegrád Group and Brazil first arose in 2017. The then President of the Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão (FUNAG), Ambassador Sérgio Eduardo Moreira Lima and the Ambassador of Hungary in Brasilia (2014–2018) Norbert Konkoly supported the idea and asked Sándor Gyula Nagy to search for authors and edit the book. As a Senior Research Fellow of the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade, he first turned to the V4 partners of IFAT (in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia) and to the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to find the best experts for the job. He managed to compile a group of very enthusiastic and dedicated authors from all these countries. Huge gratitude to them for contributing lots of data, ideas and contacts to the book. The editor would also like to express his thanks to the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the help provided in publishing this book on a unique and lesser known topic outside of the European Union.

The editor and the authors all hope that the publication will contribute to building new ties between Brazil and the Visegrád countries.

